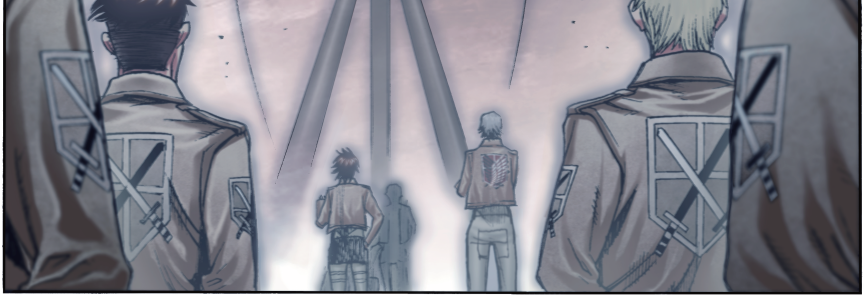
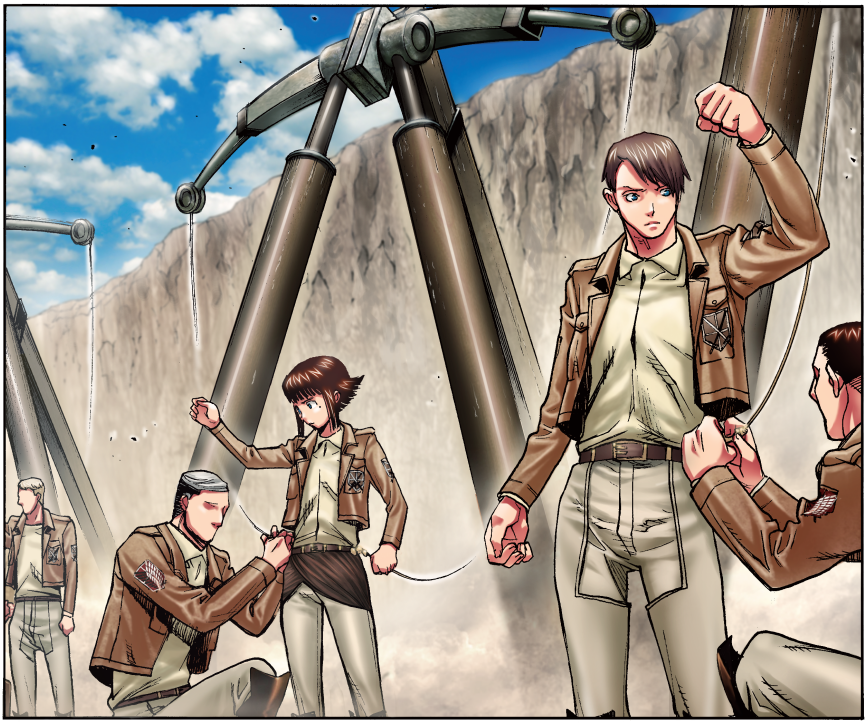
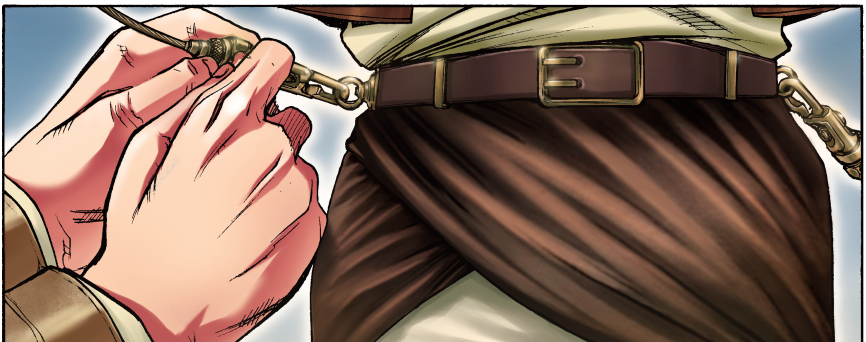
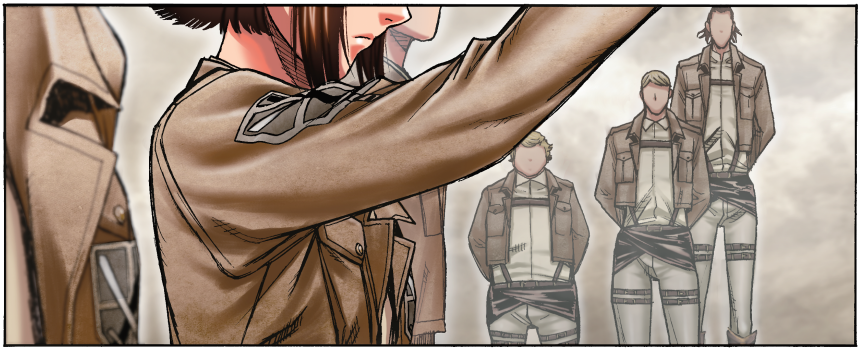
ATTACK ON TITAN
BEFORE THE FALL
15
ART BY SATOSHI SHIKI STORY BY RYO SUZUKAZE
ATTACK ON TITAN CREATED BY HAJIME ISAYAMA
CHARACTER DESIGNS BY THORES SHIBAMOTO

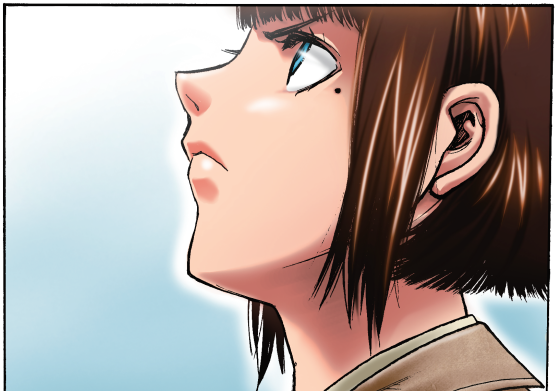


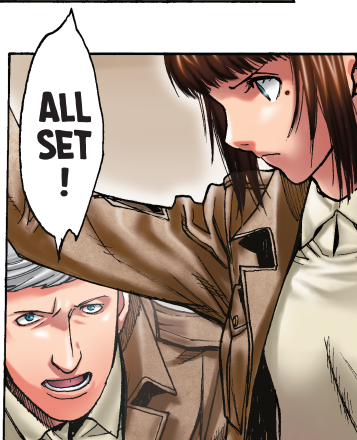




ATTACK ON TITAN
BEFORE THE FALL
15
Chapter 53: Setback at the Initiation
Chapter 54: In the Thick of Paranoia
Chapter 55: Box of Delusions
Chapter 56: Illumination in the Dead of Night
Based on "Attack on Titan"
created by Hajime Isayama
Story by: Ryo Suzukaze
Art by: Satoshi Shiki
Character Designs by: Thores Shibamoto

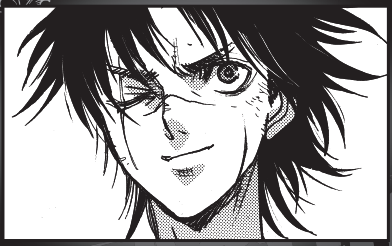





ALL SET !

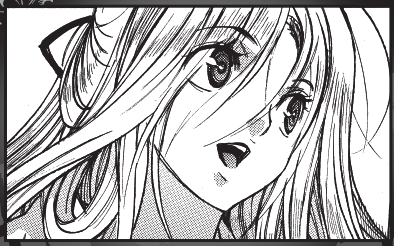
Before the fall Character Profiles

Kuklo

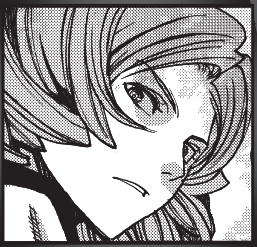


A 15-year-old boy born from a dead body packed into the vomit of a Titan, which earned him the moniker, "Titan's Son." He is fascinated with the Device as a means to defeat the Titans. Xavi defeated him in battle and left him for dead, until Rosa's group found and rescued him.

Sharle Inocencio

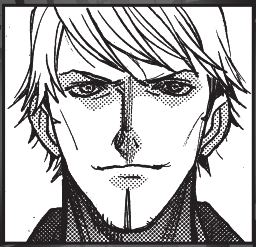


First daughter of the Inocencios, a rich merchant family within Wall Sheena. When she realized that Kuklo was a human, she taught him to speak and learn. She escaped her family home and went into the underground ward in search of Angel, inventor of the Device.



Cardina Baumeister

Kuklo's first friend in the outside world, and his companion in developing the Device.

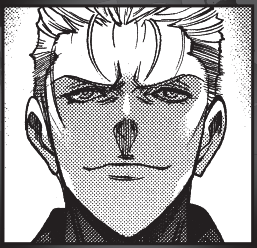


Carlo Pikale

Jorge's son and current captain of the Survey Corps. After they battled Titans together, he has great respect for Kuklo.

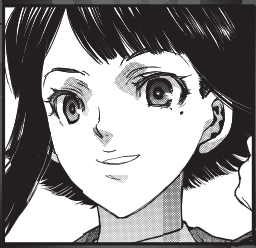
Jorge Pikale

Training Corps instructor. A former Survey Corps captain who was hailed as a hero for defeating a Titan.



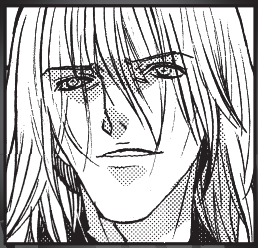
Xavi Inocencio

Head of the Inocencio family and Sharle's brother. Member of the Military Police in Shiganshina District.



Rosa Carlstead

The daughter of Maria and Sorum, Angel's longtime friends. She's in training now, hoping to enter the Survey Corps.



Angel Aaltonen

A former inventor who developed a tool to fight the Titans 15 years ago, known simply as "The Device."

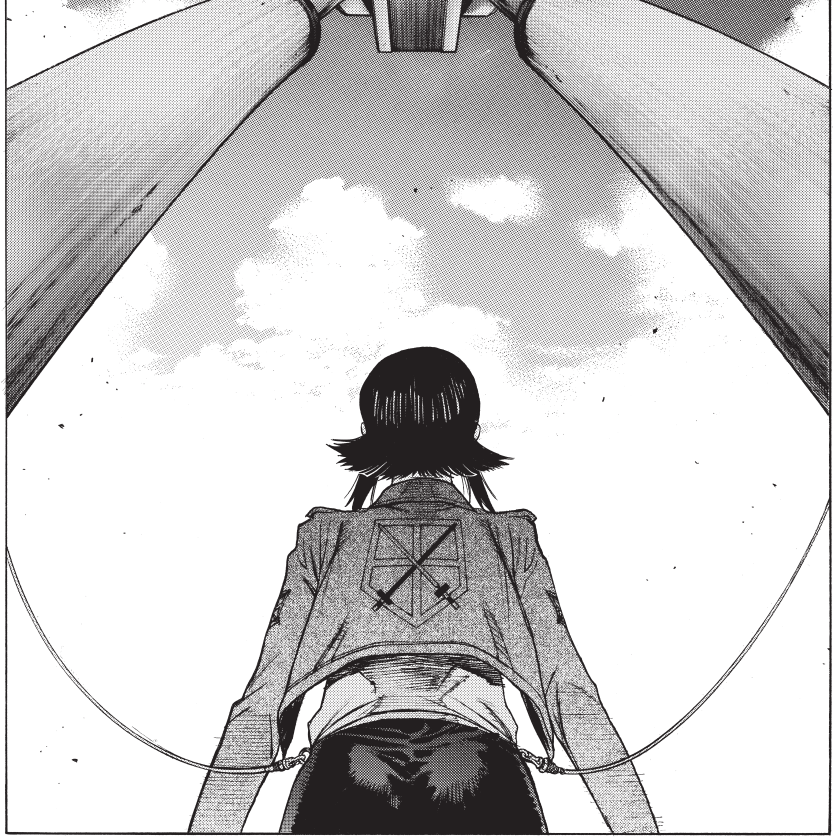
The Story So Far

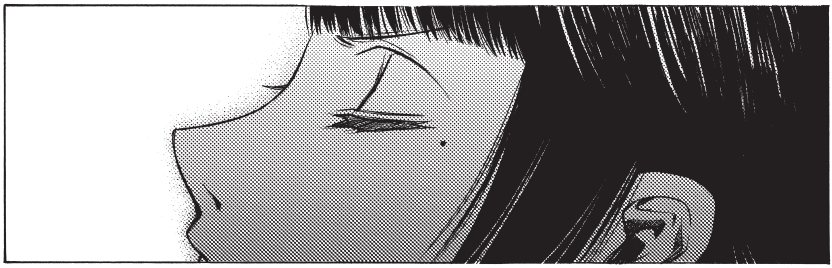
When a Titan terrorized Shiganshina District and left behind a pile of vomit, a baby boy was miraculously born of a pregnant corpse. This boy was named Kuklo, the "Son of a Titan," and treated as a sideshow freak. Eventually the wealthy merchant Dario Inocencio bought Kuklo. Dario's daughter Sharle learned that he was human and not the son of a Titan, and decided to teach him the words and knowledge of humanity. Two years later, Kuklo escaped from the mansion along with Sharle, who was being forced into a marriage she did not desire.

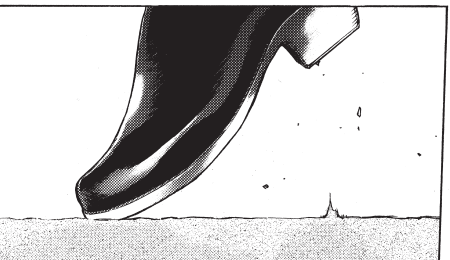
In Shiganshina District, the Survey Corps was preparing for its first expedition outside of the wall in fifteen years. Kuklo snuck into the expedition's cargo wagon, but the Titan they ran across was far worse of a monster than he expected. He helped the Survey Corps survive, but inside the walls he was greeted by the Military Police, who wanted the "Titan's Son" on charges of murdering Dario. In prison, he met Cardina, a young man jailed over political squabbles. They hoped to escape to safety when exiled beyond the Wall, but found themselves surrounded by a pack of Titans. It was through the help of Jorge, former Survey Corps Captain, that the two boys escaped with their lives. The equipment that Jorge used was the very "Device" that was the key to defeating the Titan those fifteen years ago. Kuklo and Cardina escaped the notice of the MPs by hiding in the industrial city, where they found Sharle. It is there that the three youngsters learned the truth of the ill-fated Titan-capturing expedition fifteen years earlier, and swore to uphold the will of Angel, the inventor of the Device.

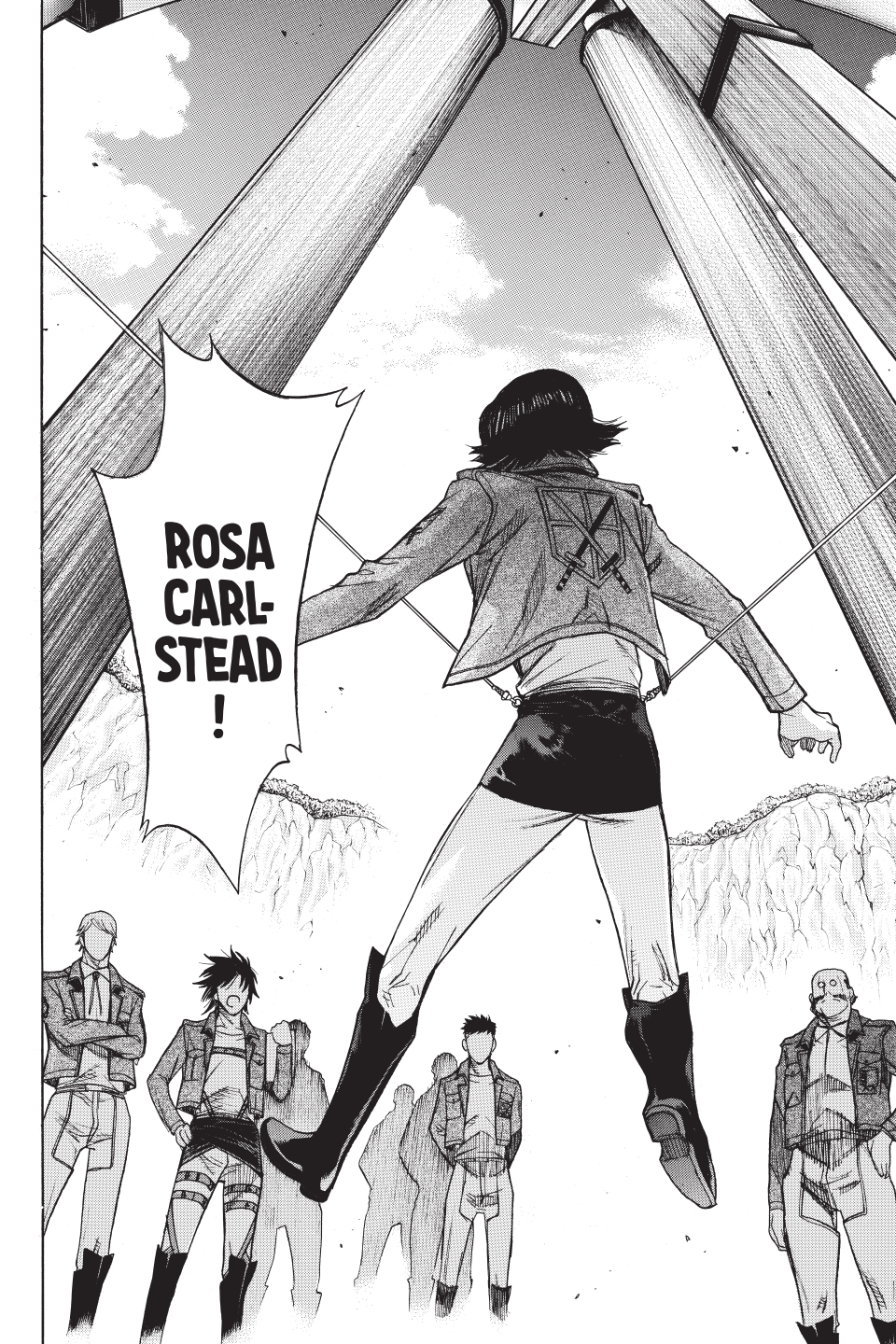
Next, Kuklo and Cardina headed back to Shiganshina to test out a new model of the Device developed by Xenophon, Angel's friend and rival, but while they were gone, a rebellion by anti-establishment dissidents broke out in the Industrial City. Kuklo was able to slip through the chaos to rescue Sharle from the dissidents, but then Sharle's brother Xavi arrived, now a member of the Military Police, and turned his sword on Kuklo. Xavi won the battle by inflicting a grievous blow on Kuklo, who fell into the river and only survived thanks to the help of Rosa, the daughter of Sorum, who lost his life on the fateful expedition fifteen years earlier.

After a month and a half of recovery, Kuklo accepted Jorge's offer of an assistant instructor position with the Survey Corps. Sharle escaped Xavi's grasp and visited Angel, inventor of the Device, who unveiled the finished version, the Vertical Maneuvering Equipment. But not all of their news was good: the Survey Corps would have to run an expedition in just two months' time, and bring back proof that the Vertical Maneuvering Equipment vanquished a Titan, or the Corps would be disbanded. Captain Carlo decided to split the trainees among an elite training class that would use what limited numbers of the equipment they could produce, and general trainees who would receive the typical Survey Corps regimen. Rosa wound up as a reserve member of the special training class, and overcame her fear of the Titans as witnessed from the top of Wall Maria, passing the secondary selection test.

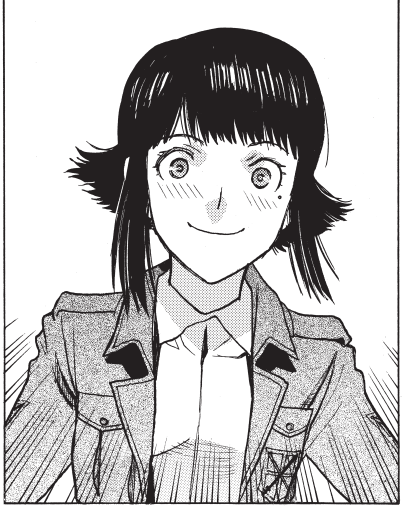






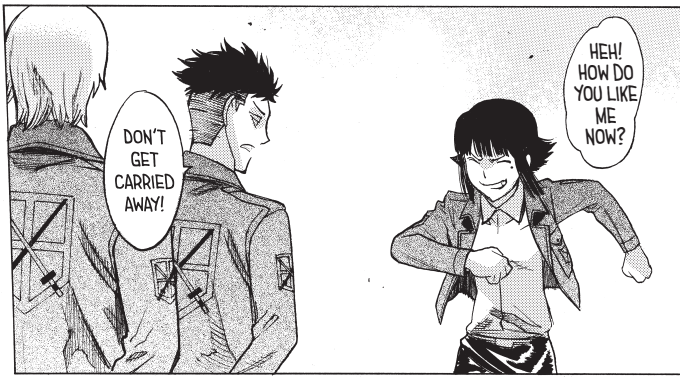

ROSA CARL-STEAD !

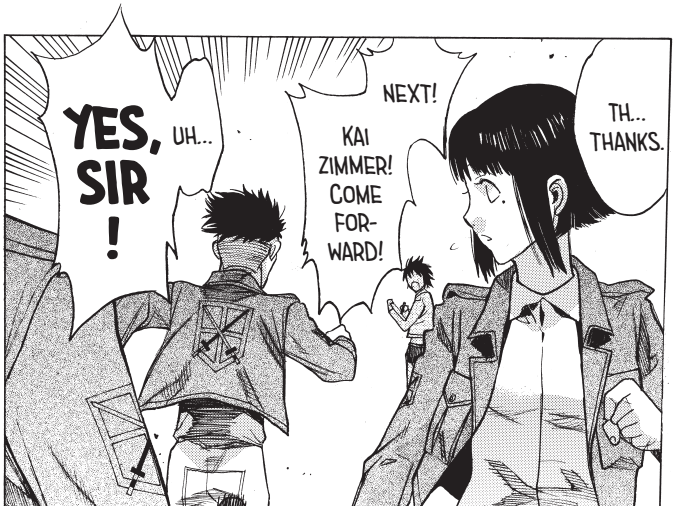
!!
YOU PASS !!!



WHOA!

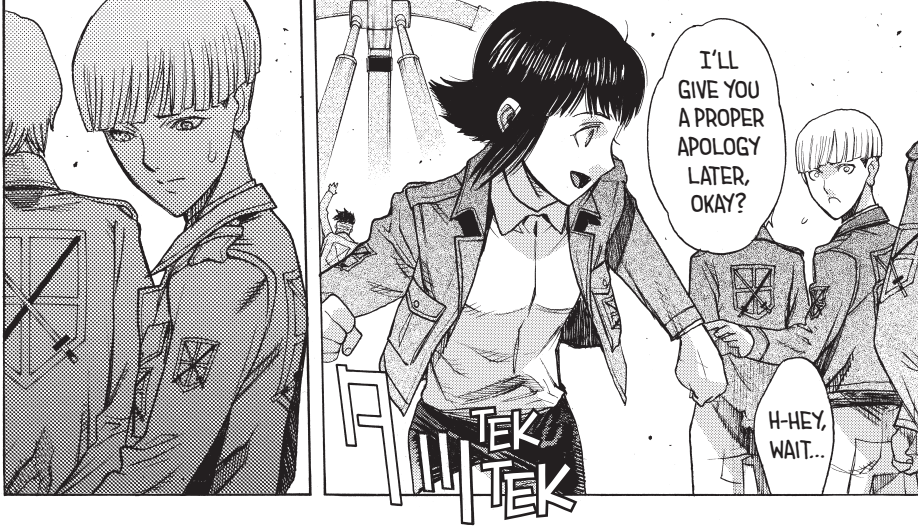
BUT I HAVE TO SAY...

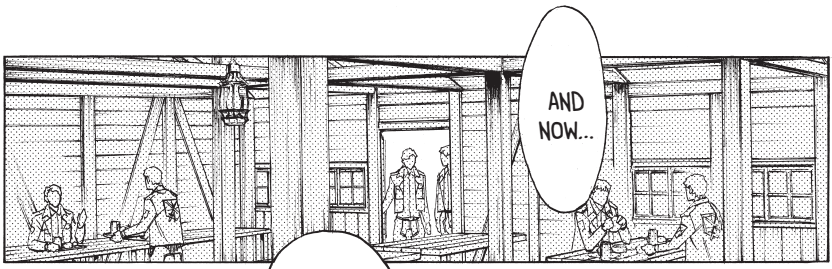

DON'T GET CARRIED AWAY!
HEH! HOW DO YOU LIKE ME NOW?


YES, SIR!
UH...
NEXT!
KAI ZIMMER! COME FOR-WARD!
TH... THANKS.

...YOU DID WELL.

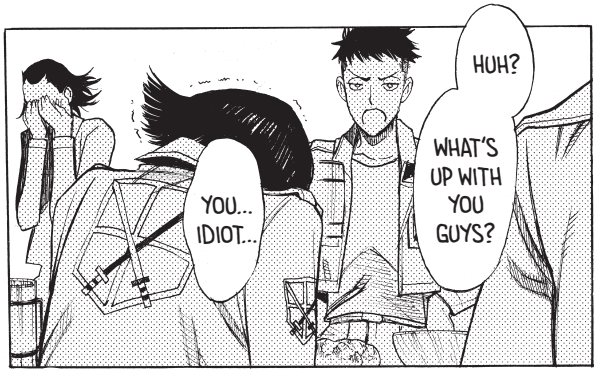
JUST YOU WAIT !!
HANG ON, I'LL BE THE NEXT ONE TO PASS!
FELIX.
I WASN'T IN MY RIGHT MIND.
I'M SORRY ABOUT EARLIER.

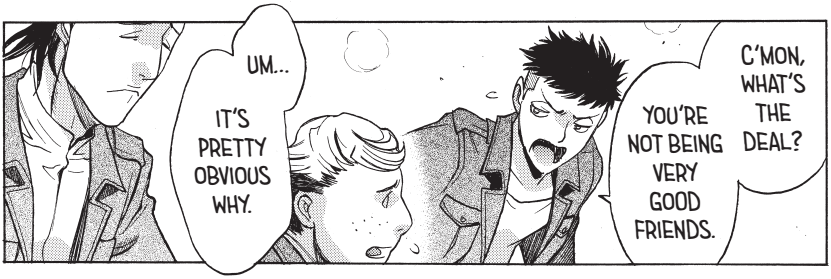

I'LL GIVE YOU A PROPER APOLOGY LATER, OKAY?
H-HEY, WAIT...
TEK TEK

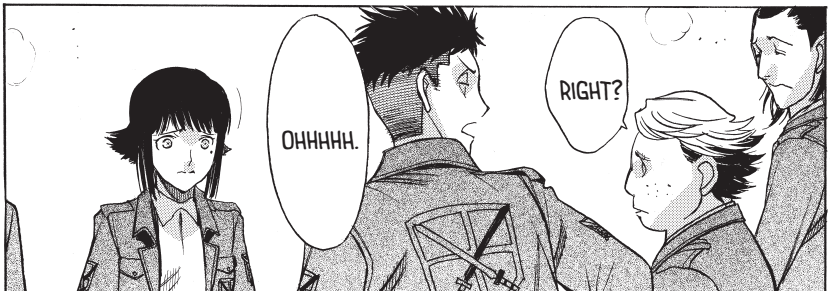

AND NOW...

TO ME AND ROSA, FOR PASSING THE SECONDARY APTITUDE TEST! **CHEERS!!**

THAT'S RIGHT, CHEERS! WITH WATER!
WHOEVER HEARD OF A TOAST WITH WATER?

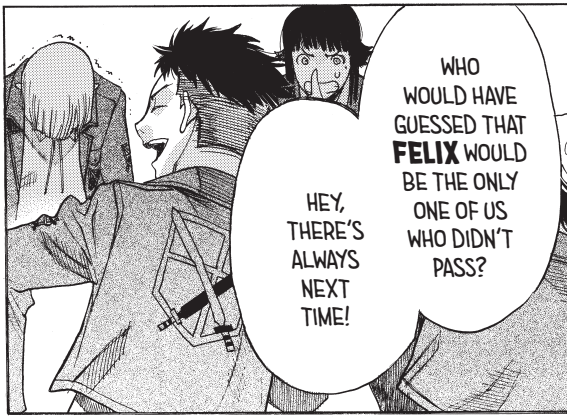

HUH?
WHAT'S UP WITH YOU GUYS?
YOU... IDIOT...

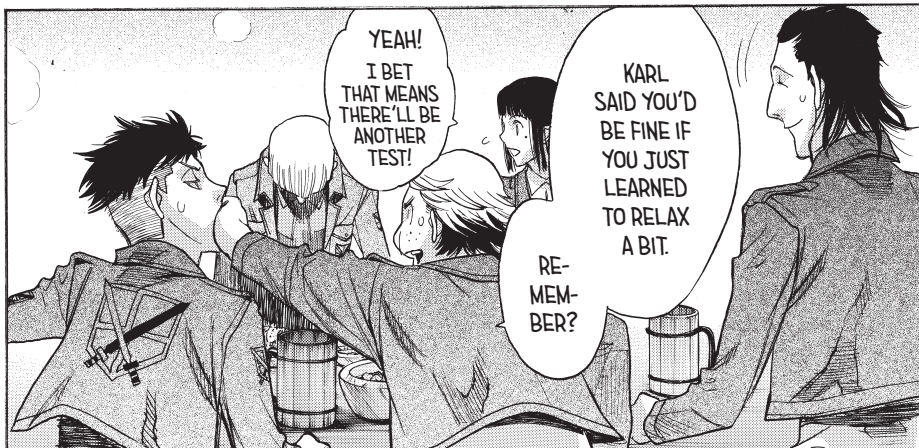

UM...
IT'S PRETTY OBVIOUS WHY.
YOU'RE NOT BEING VERY GOOD FRIENDS.
C'MON, WHAT'S THE DEAL?


OHHHHH.
RIGHT?

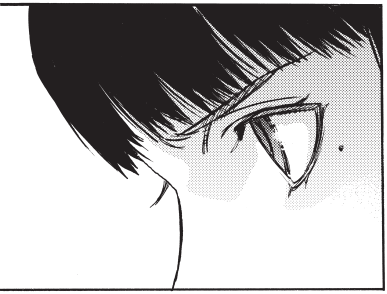
YOU MEAN ABOUT FELIX NOT PASSING. YEAH, THAT SUCKS.
WHAM

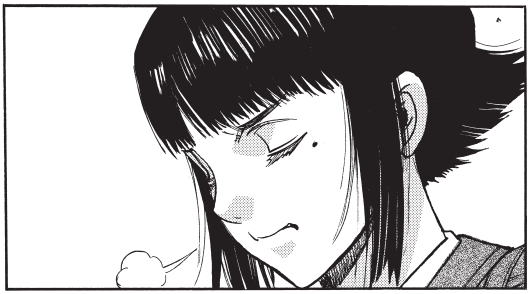
ACTUALLY, DID THEY SAY THERE'D BE A THIRD TEST?
FELIX! LISTEN!


WHO WOULD HAVE GUESSED THAT **FELIX** WOULD BE THE ONLY ONE OF US WHO DIDN'T PASS?
HEY, THERE'S ALWAYS NEXT TIME!


YEAH! I BET THAT MEANS THERE'LL BE ANOTHER TEST!
KARL SAID YOU'D BE FINE IF YOU JUST LEARNED TO RELAX A BIT.
RE-MEM-BER?

UM... SURE ...?
IS THAT UNDER-STOOD, KAI?!
AND NOW, I THINK WE'RE **DONE** WITH THIS TOPIC.

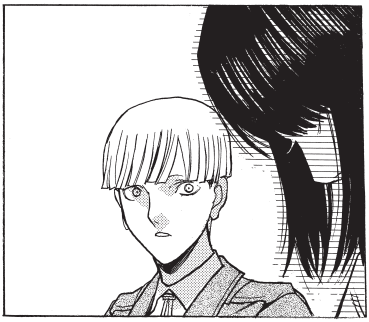


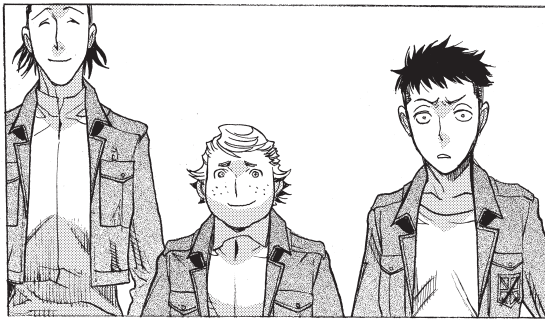


MORE IMPORTANTLY, I WANT TO TELL YOU SOMETHING.

I KNOW...I'VE BEEN ACTING UNPLEASANT LATELY.

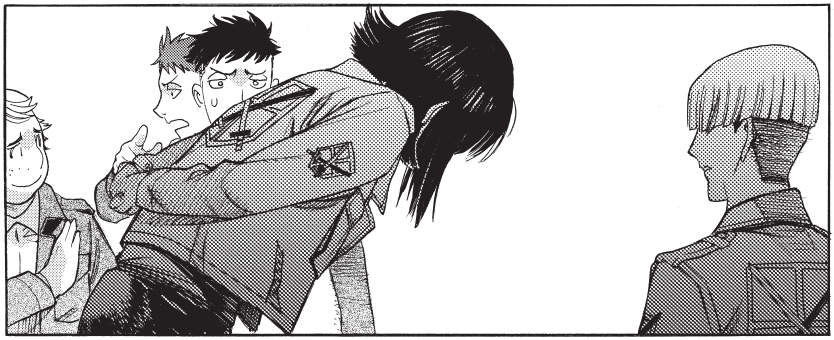
I'M SORRY, GUYS!

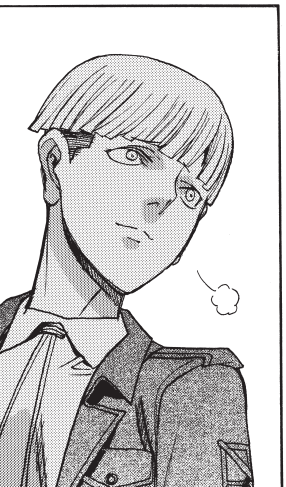


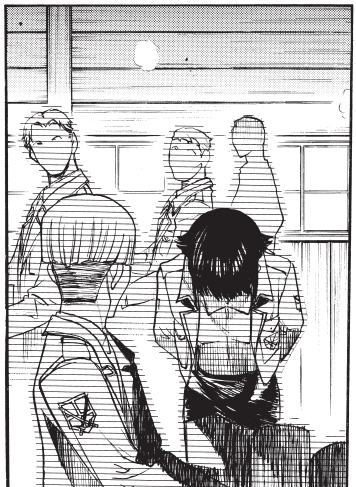


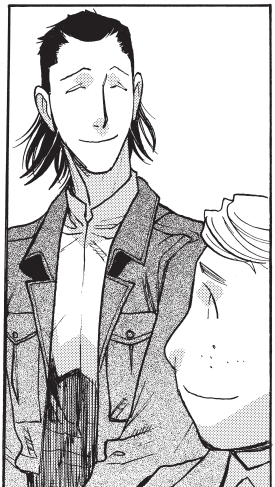
FELIX TRIED TO REACH OUT TO ME BECAUSE HE WAS WORRIED ABOUT ME...
...AND I THINK I WAS REALLY CRUEL BACK TO HIM.

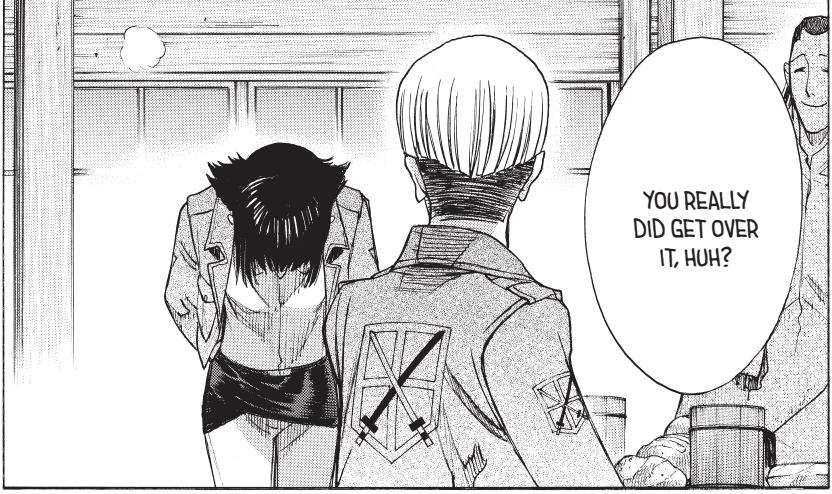
I'M SORRY.

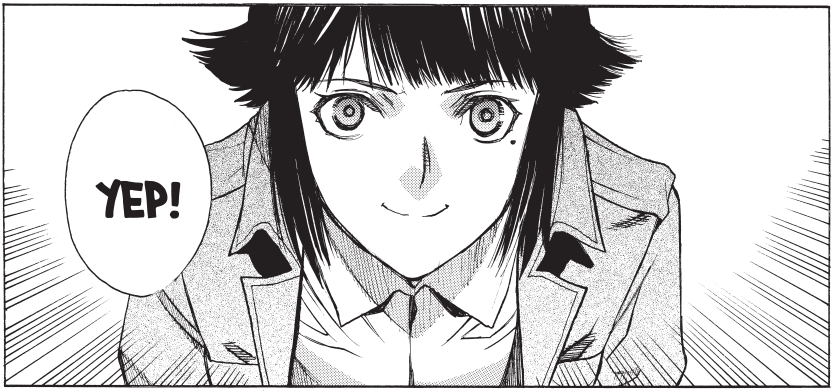


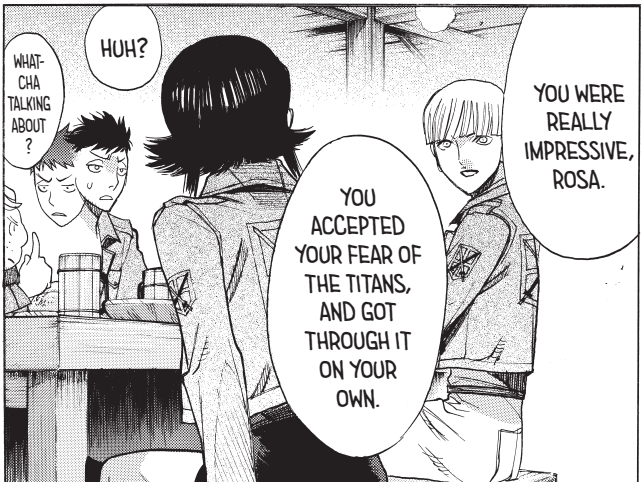


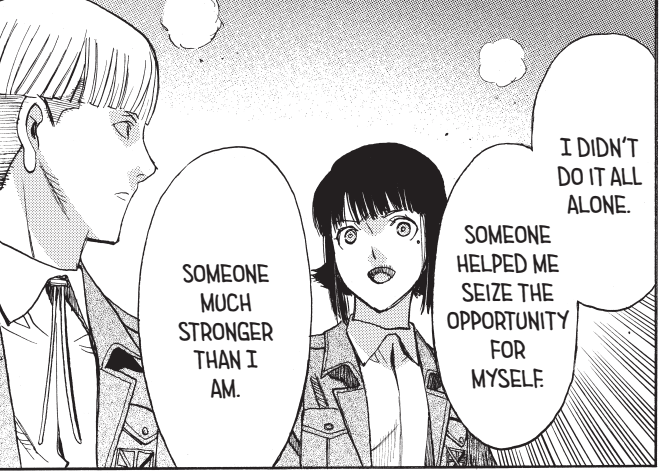


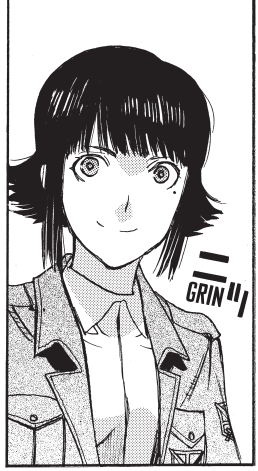



YOU REALLY DID GET OVER IT, HUH?

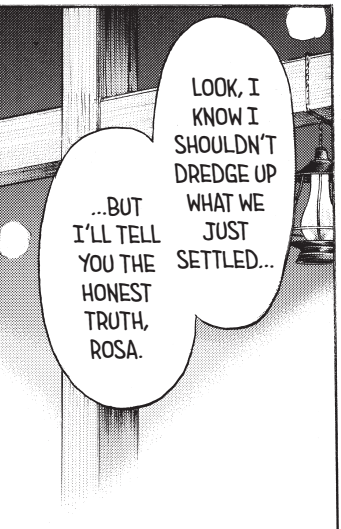

YEP!

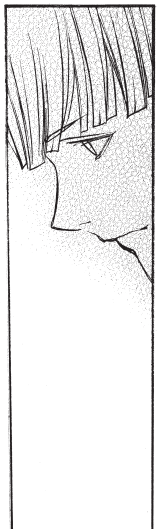

WHAT-CHA TALKING ABOUT?
HUH?
YOU ACCEPTED YOUR FEAR OF THE TITANS, AND GOT THROUGH IT ON YOUR OWN.
YOU WERE REALLY IMPRESSIVE, ROSA.

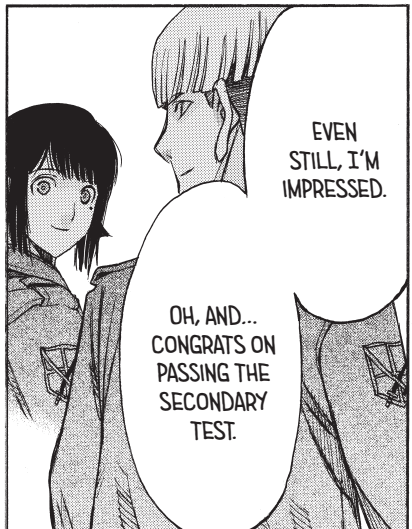

I DIDN'T DO IT ALL ALONE.
SOMEONE HELPED ME SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR MYSELF.
SOMEONE MUCH STRONGER THAN I AM.

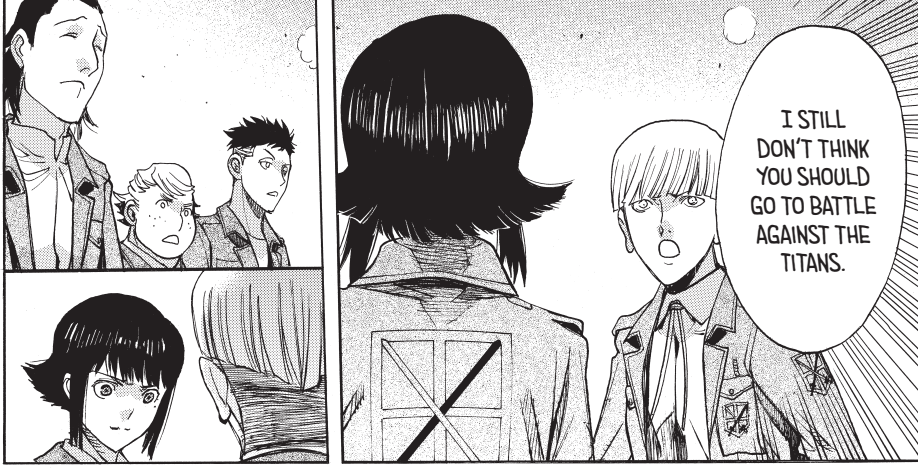

GRIN

OHH...
I SEE.
HUH?
WHO WAS IT?

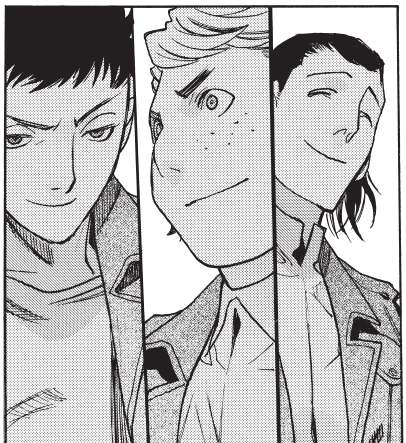

LOOK, I KNOW I SHOULDN'T DREDGE UP WHAT WE JUST SETTLED...
...BUT I'LL TELL YOU THE HONEST TRUTH, ROSA.




EVEN STILL, I'M IMPRESSED.
OH, AND... CONGRATS ON PASSING THE SECONDARY TEST.

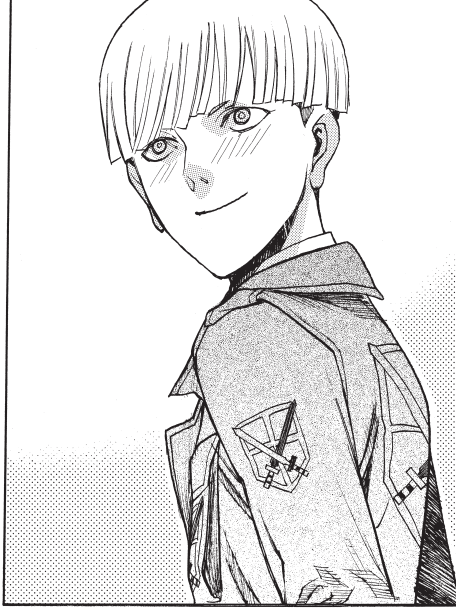

I STILL DON'T THINK YOU SHOULD GO TO BATTLE AGAINST THE TITANS.

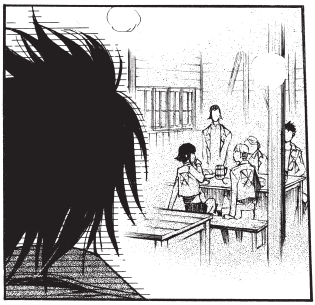
THANK YOU, FELIX!
I KNOW I CAN HONESTLY SAY THAT NOW.
BUT I'M STILL GOING BEYOND THE WALL! I MADE UP MY MIND!

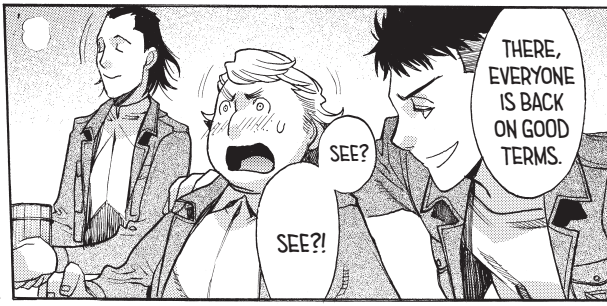


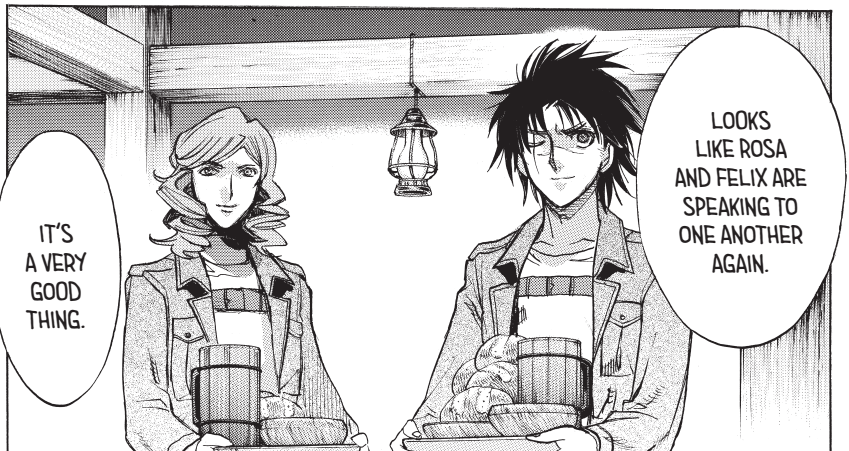
IT'S NOT BECAUSE I WANT TO AVENGE MY FATHER OR ANYTHING.
I FEEL LIKE I FOUND MY OWN REASON FOR WANTING TO FIGHT THEM.

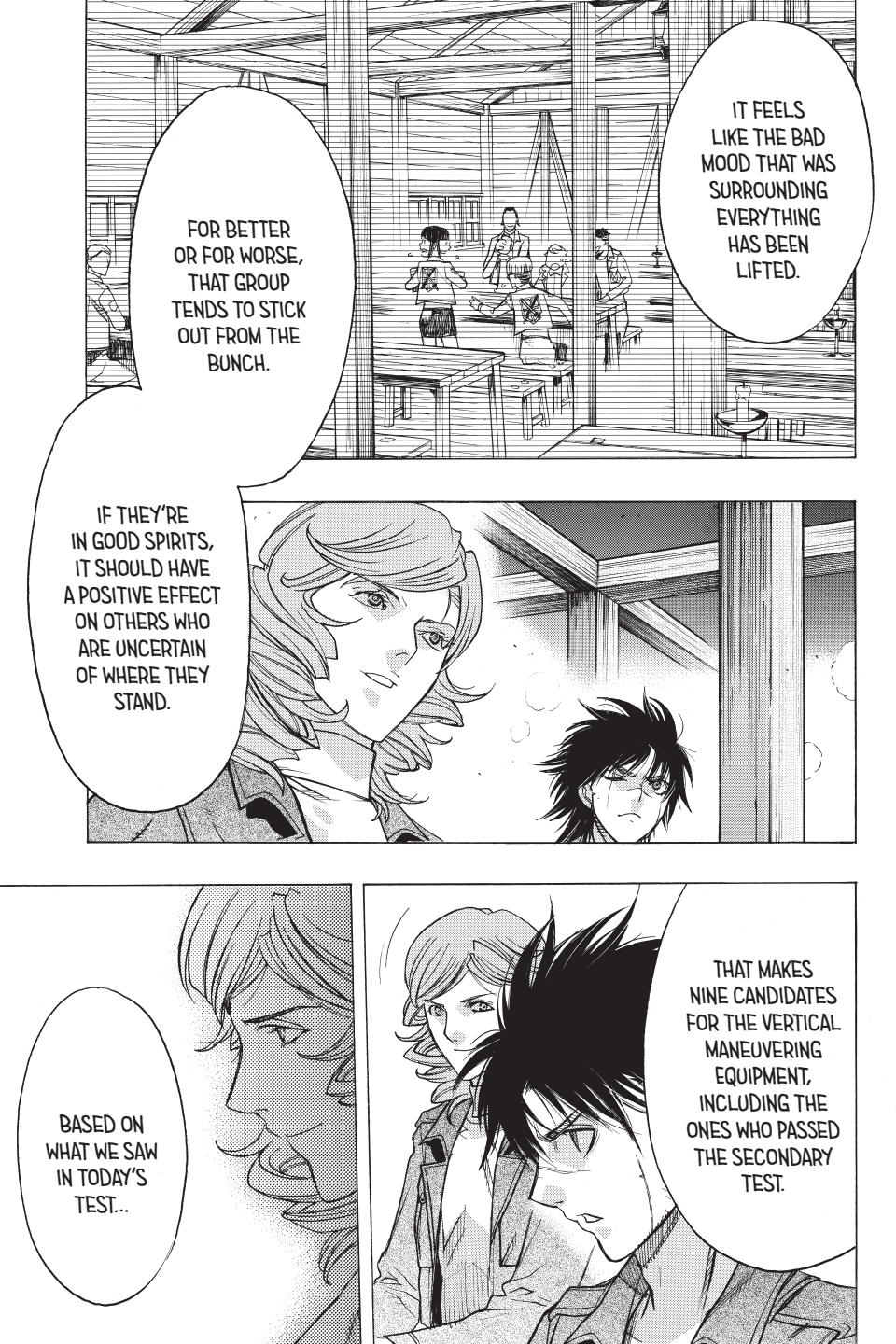
MY REASON FOR FIGHT-ING...
IN THAT CASE...
...I'LL MAKE SURE I PASS THE NEXT TEST SO I CAN CATCH UP WITH THE REST OF YOU.
...IS TO PROTECT YOU, ROSA!
WHAT?!?





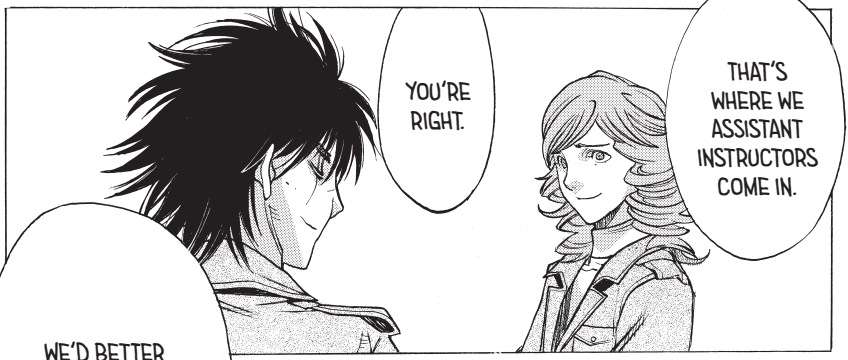

THERE, EVERYONE IS BACK ON GOOD TERMS.
SEE?
SEE?!


LOOKS LIKE ROSA AND FELIX ARE SPEAKING TO ONE ANOTHER AGAIN.
IT'S A VERY GOOD THING.


IT FEELS LIKE THE BAD MOOD THAT WAS SURROUNDING EVERYTHING HAS BEEN LIFTED.
FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE, THAT GROUP TENDS TO STICK OUT FROM THE BUNCH.
IF THEY'RE IN GOOD SPIRITS, IT SHOULD HAVE A POSITIVE EFFECT ON OTHERS WHO ARE UNCERTAIN OF WHERE THEY STAND.
THAT MAKES NINE CANDIDATES FOR THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING THE ONES WHO PASSED THE SECONDARY TEST.
BASED ON WHAT WE SAW IN TODAY'S TEST...

HOW MANY OF THE SEVENTEEN WILL BE READY BY THE DAY OF THE EXPEDITION ...?
THE TRAINING HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN.

...IT'S ONLY A MATTER OF TIME UNTIL THE OTHER EIGHT PASS, TOO.

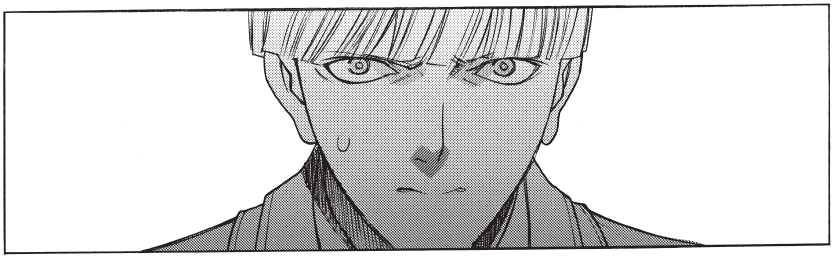

YOU'RE RIGHT.
THAT'S WHERE WE ASSISTANT INSTRUCTORS COME IN.

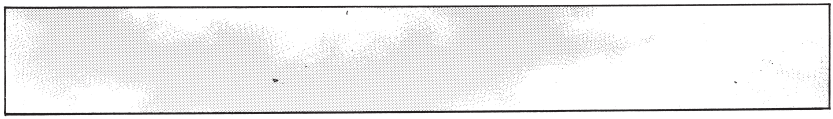
WE'D BETTER KEEP IMPROVING, OR ELSE THE STUDENTS ARE GOING TO SURPASS US.

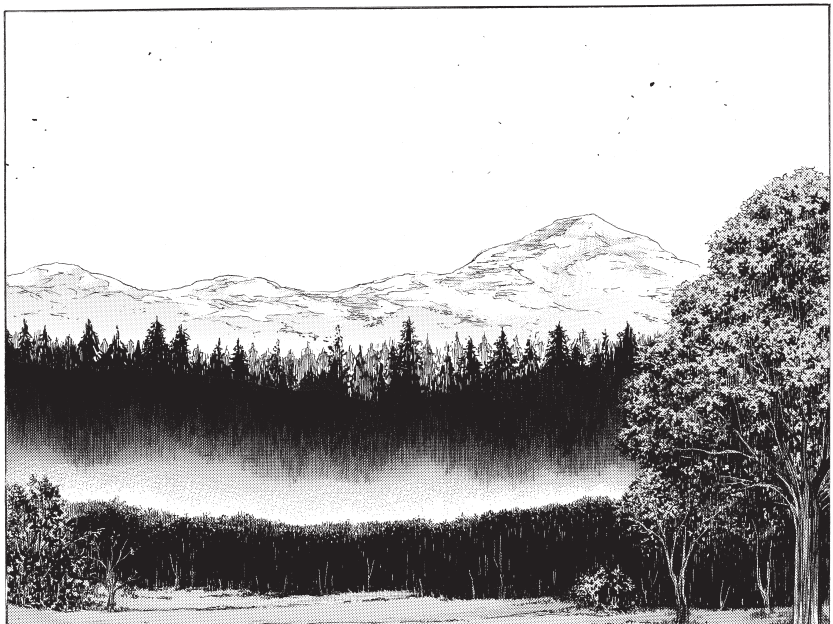
THAT AFTER-NOON...

...FOLLOWING THE THREE IN THE PRIMARY SELECTION GROUP...

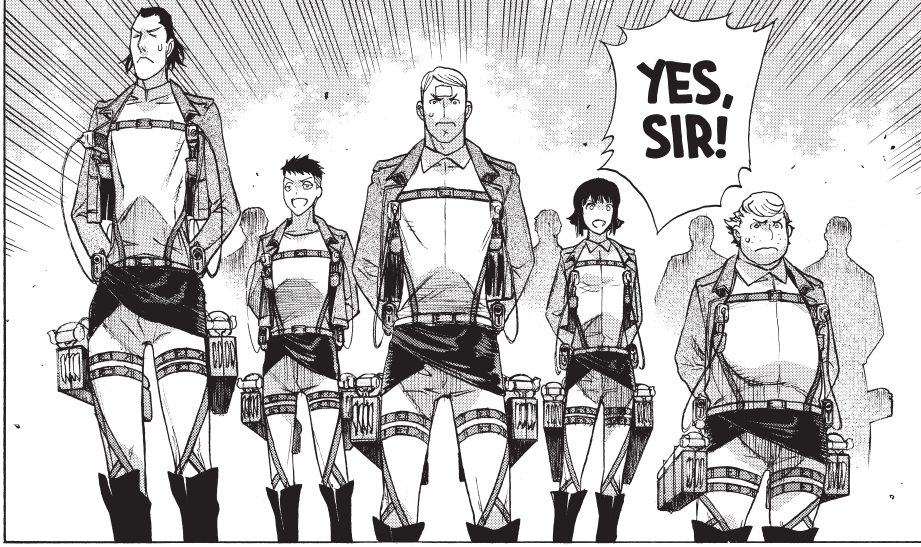
...THE SIX IN THE SECONDARY GROUP RECEIVED THEIR VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT.

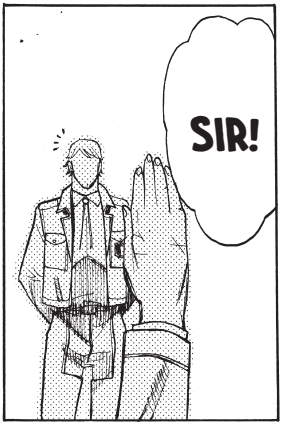






TODAY, THE PRIMARY SELECTION MEMBERS AND THE SECONDARY MEMBERS FROM THIS MORNING'S TEST...
...WILL OPERATE THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT, PICKING UP WHERE WE LEFT OFF YESTERDAY!
I TRUST YOU'RE ALL FAMILIAR WITH THE STEPS?!


YES, SIR!


SIR!

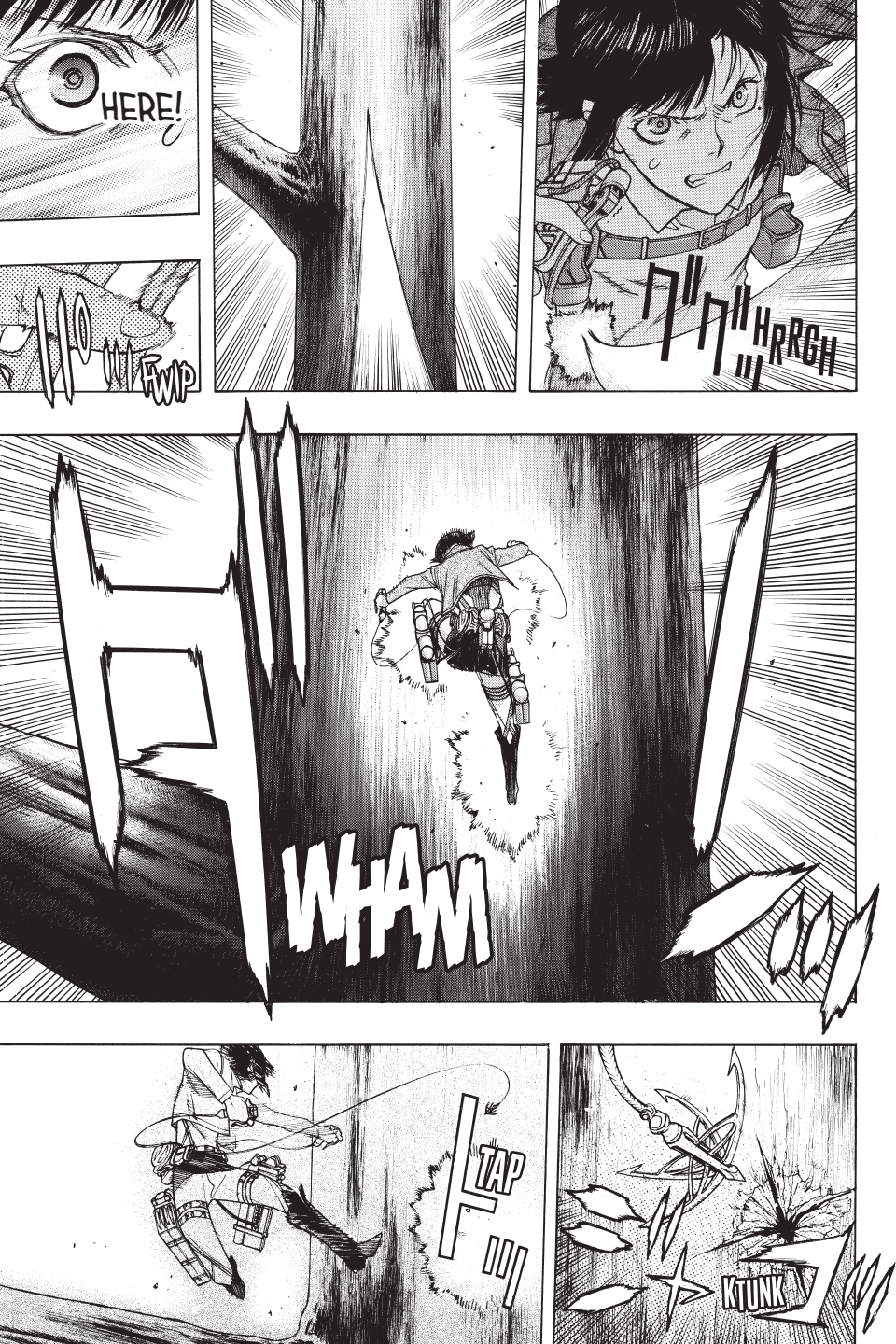
...

...!
PERHAPS WE'LL HAVE THE PRIMARY MEMBERS GO FIRST, TO REPAIR THEIR REPUTATIONS AFTER YESTERDAY'S FAILURE.

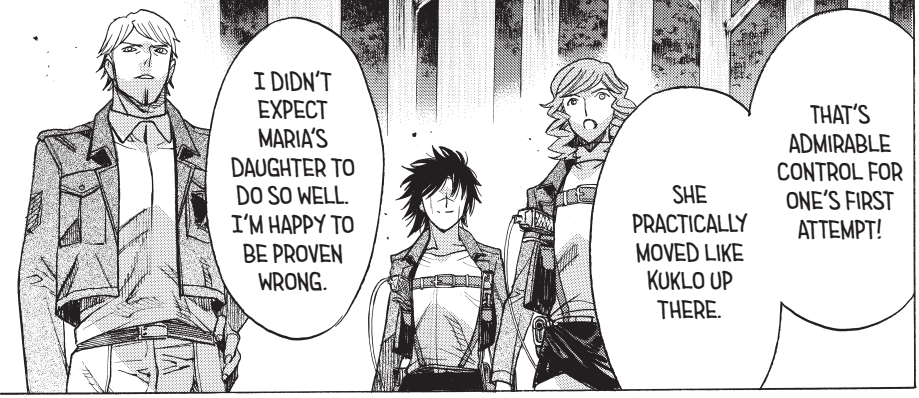
I WOULD LIKE TO TRY!

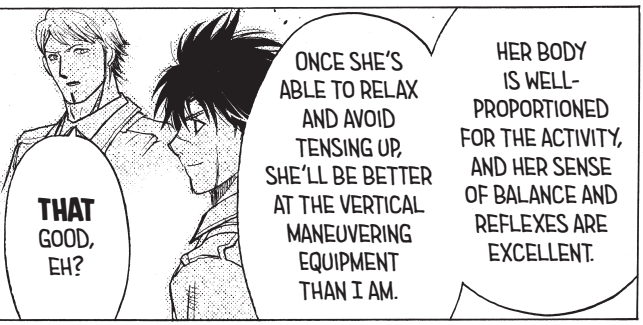
ROSA CARL-STEAD? VERY WELL.
GIVE IT A GO!
YES, SIR!
GUMPH
REMEMBER HOW KUKLO DID IT YESTERDAY.

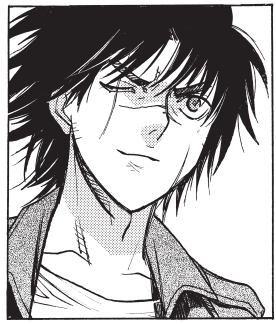
RHOO
GAK
DOOM

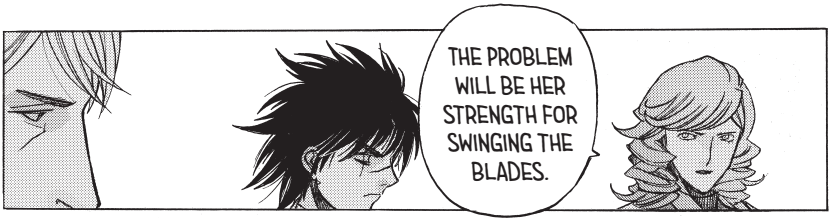

HERE!
FWIP
HRRGH
WHAM
TAP
KTUNK

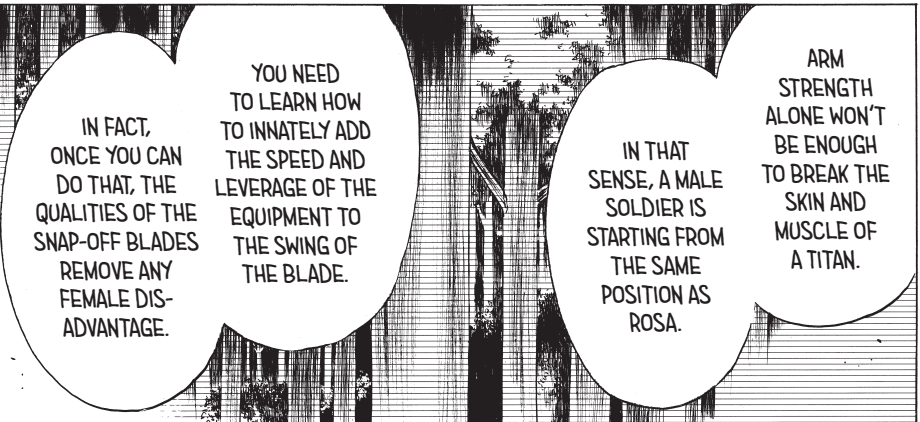
あ!
OOOH!
TUP
WHOOPS!
SHE'S QUITE A TALENT...
RAHHH
YOU DID IT, ROSA!
DAMN!

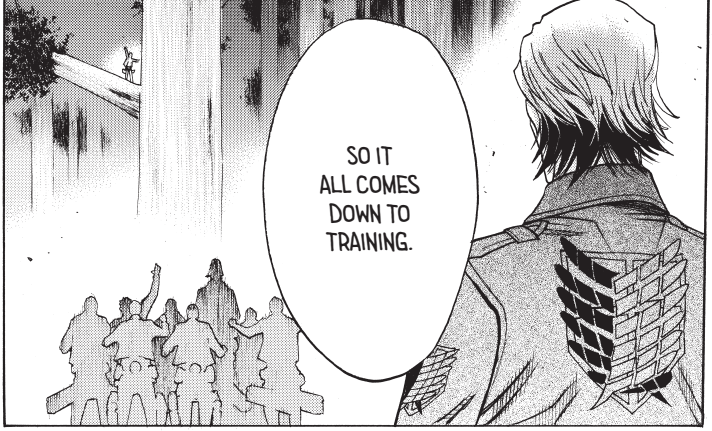

I DIDN'T EXPECT MARIA'S DAUGHTER TO DO SO WELL. I'M HAPPY TO BE PROVEN WRONG.
SHE PRACTICALLY MOVED LIKE KUKLO UP THERE.
THAT'S ADMIRABLE CONTROL FOR ONE'S FIRST ATTEMPT!


THAT GOOD, EH?
ONCE SHE'S ABLE TO RELAX AND AVOID TENSING UP, SHE'LL BE BETTER AT THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT THAN I AM.
HER BODY IS WELL-PROPORTIONED FOR THE ACTIVITY, AND HER SENSE OF BALANCE AND REFLEXES ARE EXCELLENT.

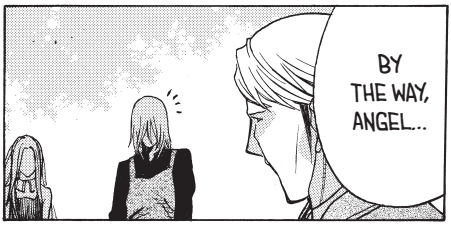


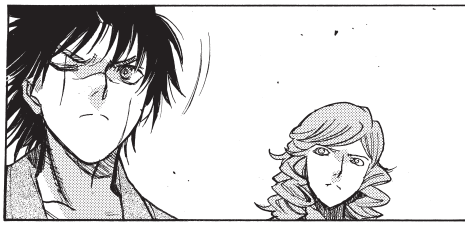

THE PROBLEM WILL BE HER STRENGTH FOR SWINGING THE BLADES.

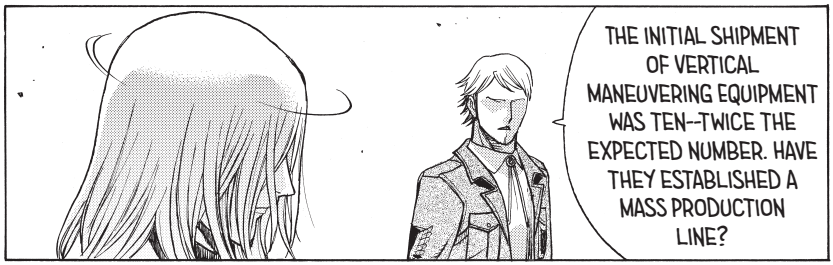

IN FACT, ONCE YOU CAN DO THAT, THE QUALITIES OF THE SNAP-OFF BLADES REMOVE ANY FEMALE DIS-ADVANTAGE.
YOU NEED TO LEARN HOW TO INNATELY ADD THE SPEED AND LEVERAGE OF THE EQUIPMENT TO THE SWING OF THE BLADE.
IN THAT SENSE, A MALE SOLDIER IS STARTING FROM THE SAME POSITION AS ROSA.
ARM STRENGTH ALONE WON'T BE ENOUGH TO BREAK THE SKIN AND MUSCLE OF A TITAN.

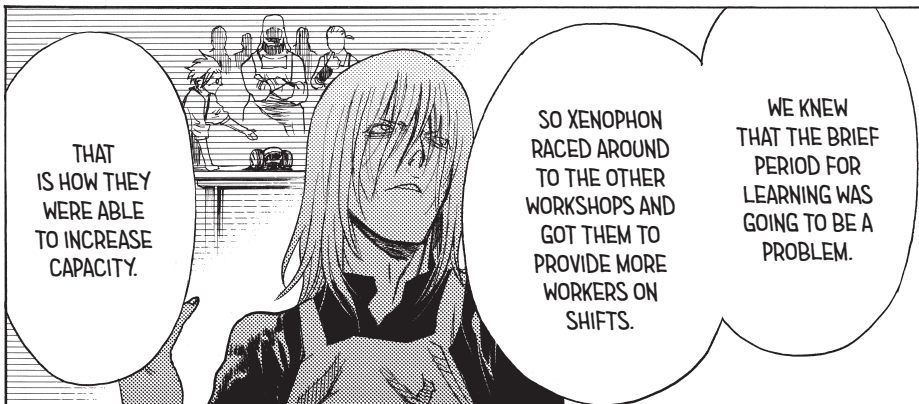

SO IT ALL COMES DOWN TO TRAINING.

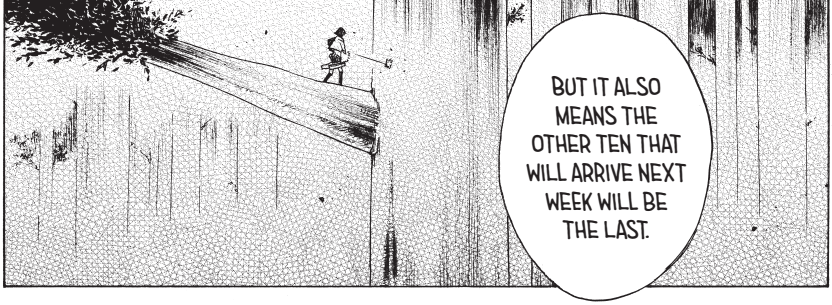
I SEE.

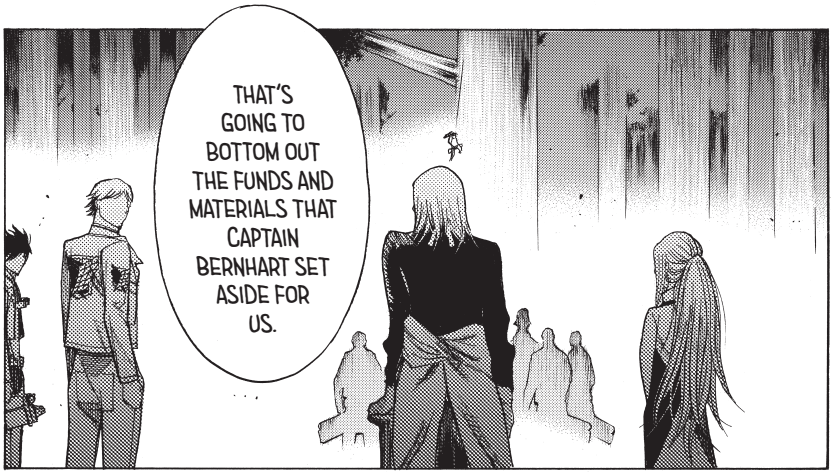

BY THE WAY, ANGEL...

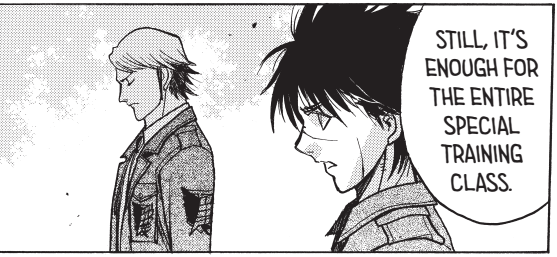


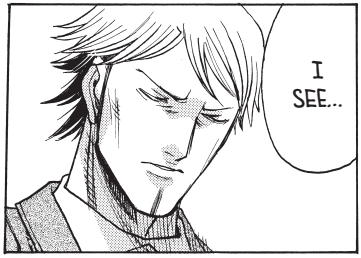

THE INITIAL SHIPMENT OF VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT WAS TEN--TWICE THE EXPECTED NUMBER. HAVE THEY ESTABLISHED A MASS PRODUCTION LINE?


WE KNEW THAT THE BRIEF PERIOD FOR LEARNING WAS GOING TO BE A PROBLEM.
SO XENOPHON RACED AROUND TO THE OTHER WORKSHOPS AND GOT THEM TO PROVIDE MORE WORKERS ON SHIFTS.
THAT IS HOW THEY WERE ABLE TO INCREASE CAPACITY.

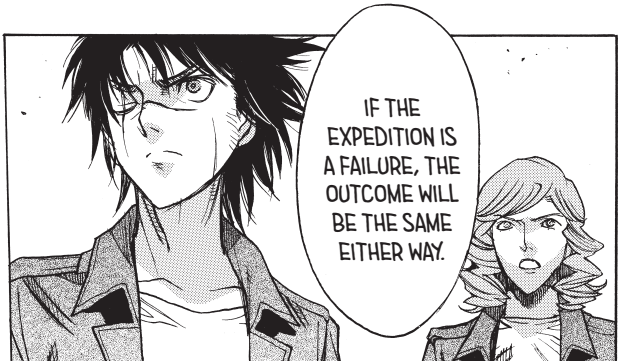

BUT IT ALSO MEANS THE OTHER TEN THAT WILL ARRIVE NEXT WEEK WILL BE THE LAST.


THAT'S GOING TO BOTTOM OUT THE FUNDS AND MATERIALS THAT CAPTAIN BERNHART SET ASIDE FOR US.

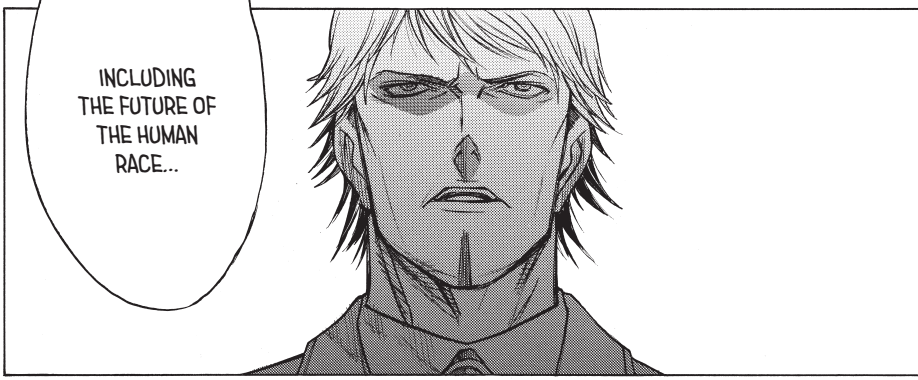

STILL, IT'S ENOUGH FOR THE ENTIRE SPECIAL TRAINING CLASS.

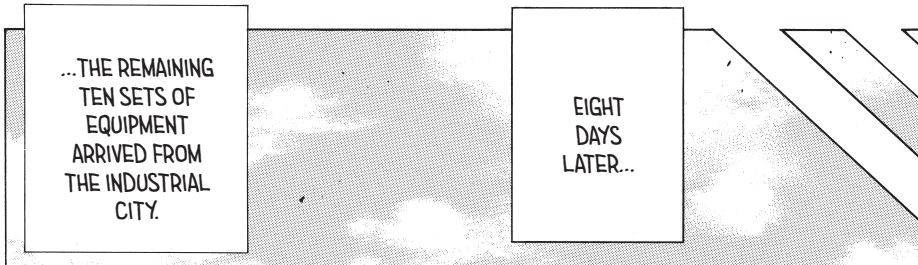

I SEE...

THAT'S RIGHT...


IF THE EXPEDITION IS A FAILURE, THE OUTCOME WILL BE THE SAME EITHER WAY.

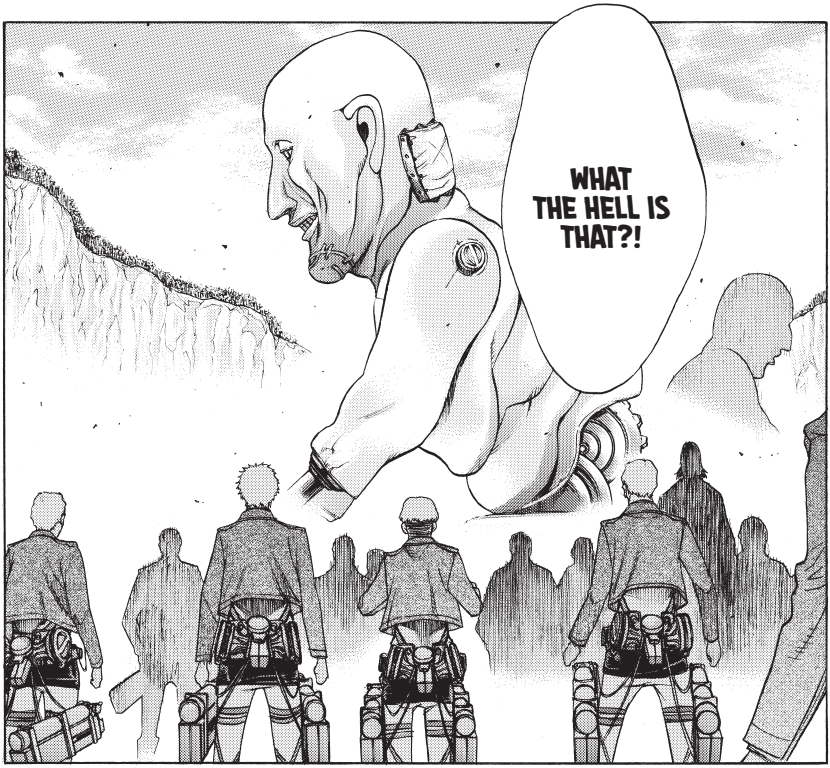
EVERYTHING WILL BE SETTLED IN ANOTHER FIFTY DAYS.


INCLUDING THE FUTURE OF THE HUMAN RACE...


...THE REMAINING TEN SETS OF EQUIPMENT ARRIVED FROM THE INDUSTRIAL CITY.
EIGHT DAYS LATER...

THAT SAME DAY, THE TERTIARY SELECTION TEST WAS HELD, AND ALL EIGHT REMAINING CANDIDATES PASSED.
THEY PROMPTLY RECEIVED THEIR FRESHLY-DELIVERED VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT.
AND WITH THE SECOND SHIPMENT OF EQUIPMENT CAME ANOTHER SPECIAL CARGO.

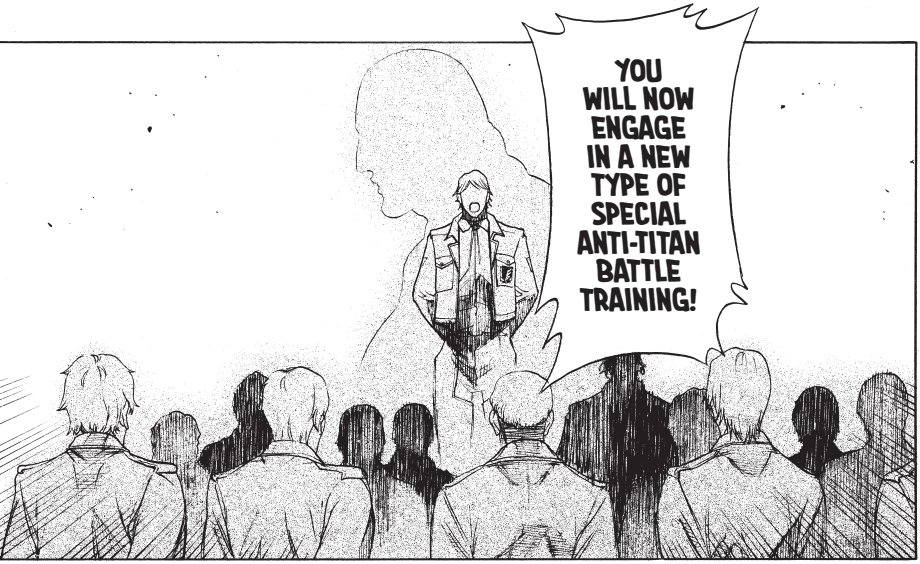
WH...

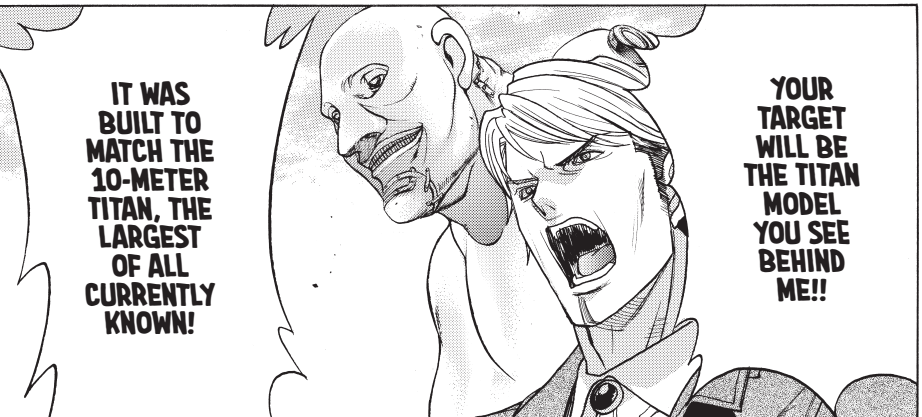

WHAT THE HELL IS THAT?!

...IT'S HUGE...
OR... A MODEL OF ONE, I SUPPOSE.

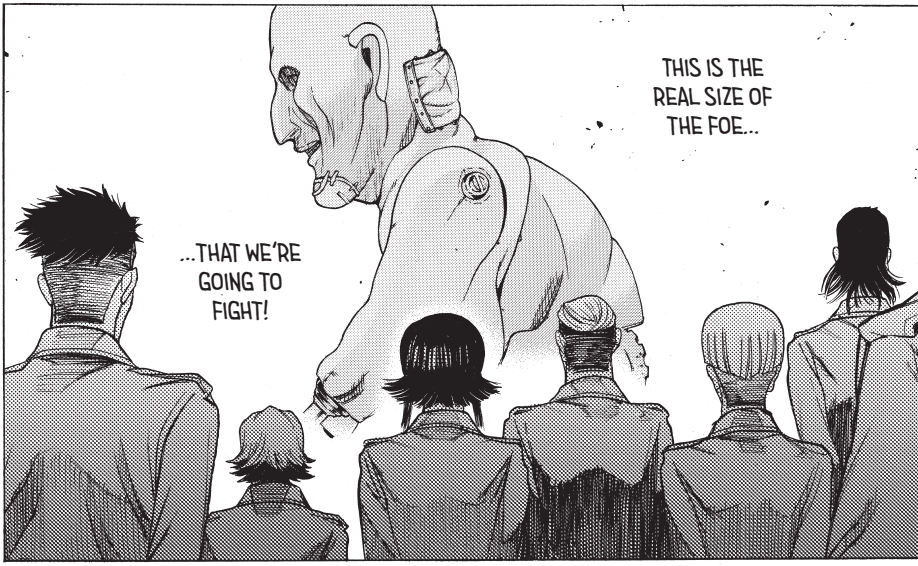
A... TITAN?

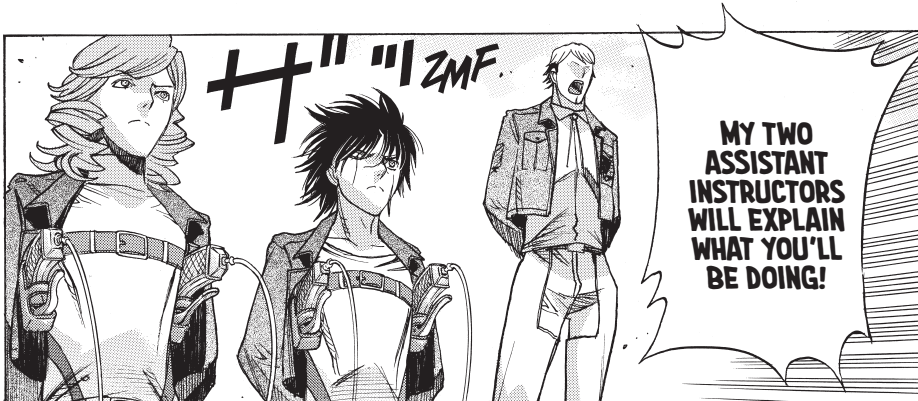
FALL IN !!!


YOU WILL NOW ENGAGE IN A NEW TYPE OF SPECIAL ANTI-TITAN BATTLE TRAINING!

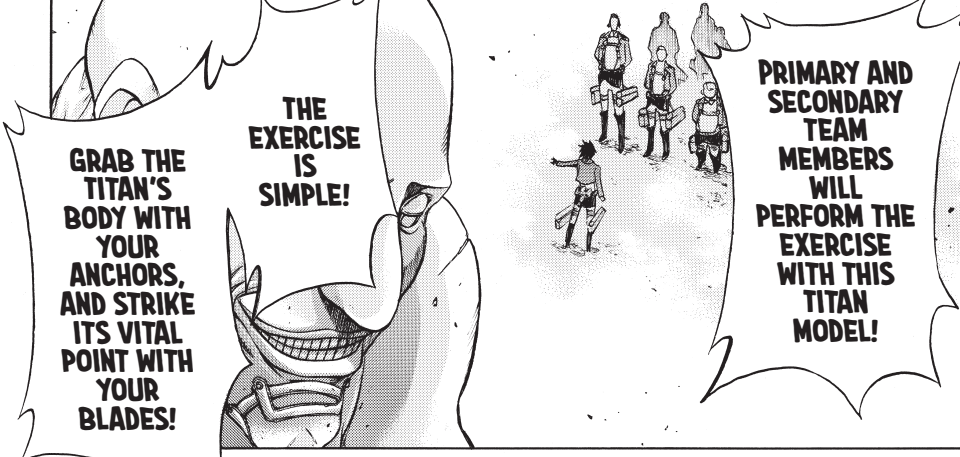

IT WAS BUILT TO MATCH THE 10-METER TITAN, THE LARGEST OF ALL CURRENTLY KNOWN!
YOUR TARGET WILL BE THE TITAN MODEL YOU SEE BEHIND ME!!

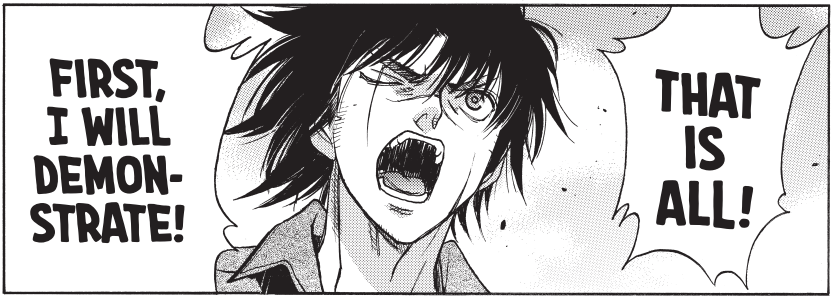
IT'S TRUE...
!
SO THAT'S OUR ENEMY, HUH?
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SEEING IT FROM THE WALL AND SEEING IT UP CLOSE IS VAST...
SO THAT'S A 10-METER TITAN...

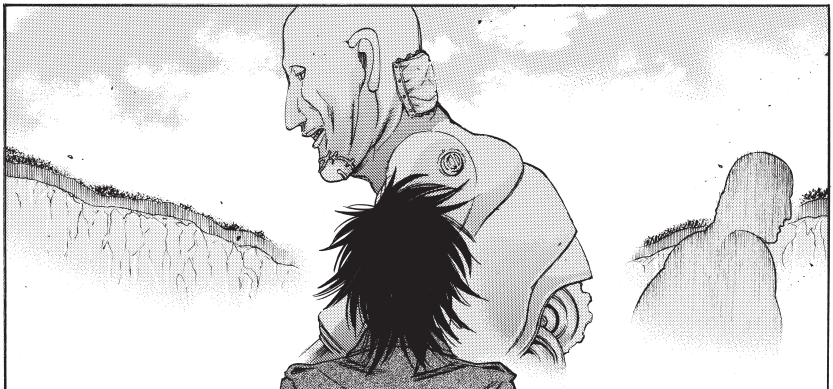

THIS IS THE REAL SIZE OF THE FOE...
...THAT WE'RE GOING TO FIGHT!


ZMF
MY TWO ASSISTANT INSTRUCTORS WILL EXPLAIN WHAT YOU'LL BE DOING!

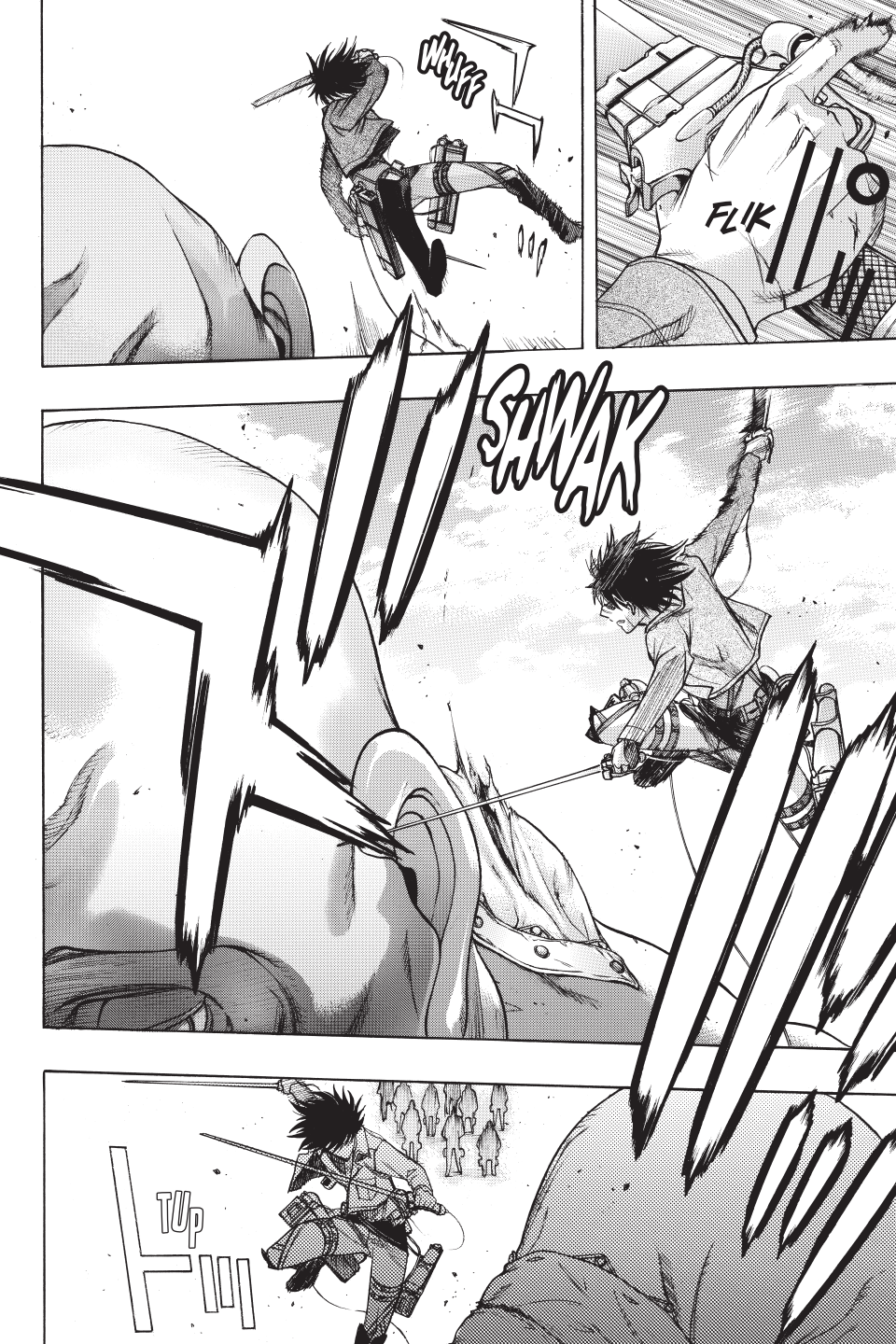
YOU ARE GOING TO SPLIT INTO TWO TEAMS TO CONDUCT THIS EXERCISE!
THOSE OF YOU IN THE THIRD GROUP WHO JUST RECEIVED YOUR EQUIPMENT, FOLLOW INSTRUCTOR CARL TO THE TITAN MODEL IN THE REAR!
THAT TEAM WILL ONLY ATTEMPT TO FIRE ANCHORS TO HIT THE TITAN!
ZSHH

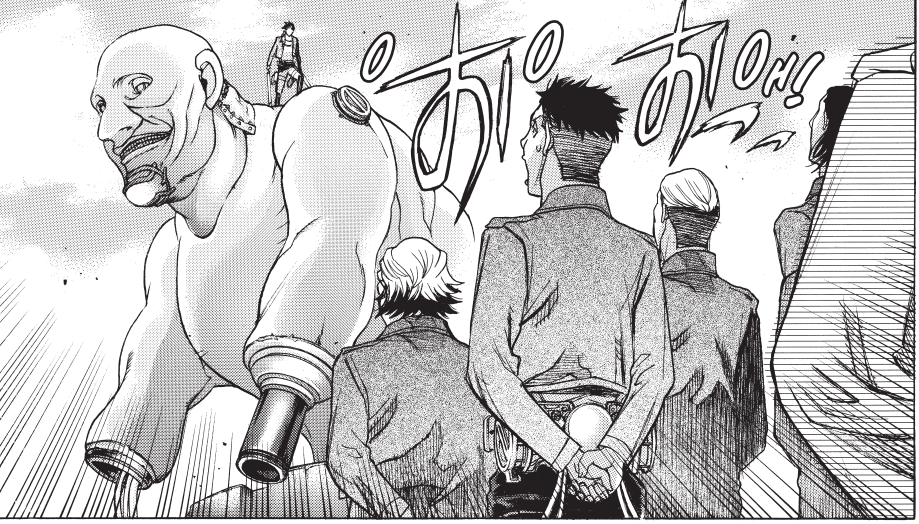

GRAB THE TITAN'S BODY WITH YOUR ANCHORS, AND STRIKE ITS VITAL POINT WITH YOUR BLADES!
THE EXERCISE IS SIMPLE!
PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TEAM MEMBERS WILL PERFORM THE EXERCISE WITH THIS TITAN MODEL!

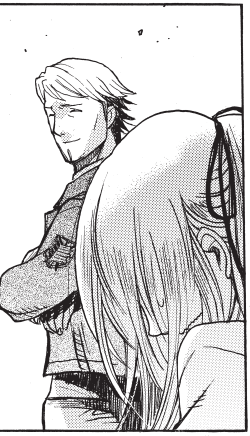

FIRST, I WILL DEMON-STRATE!
THAT IS ALL!

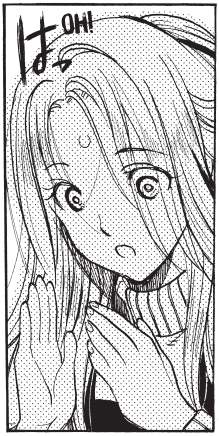


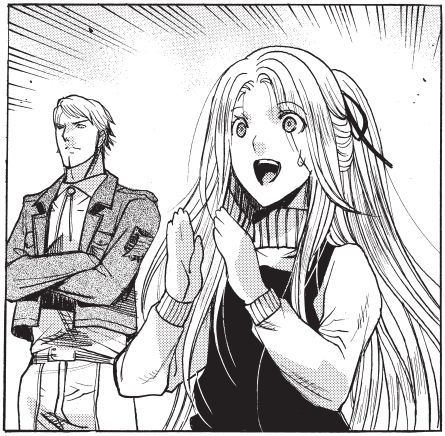
GAK
PSHUU
FWIP
GREEEEE
DOOM

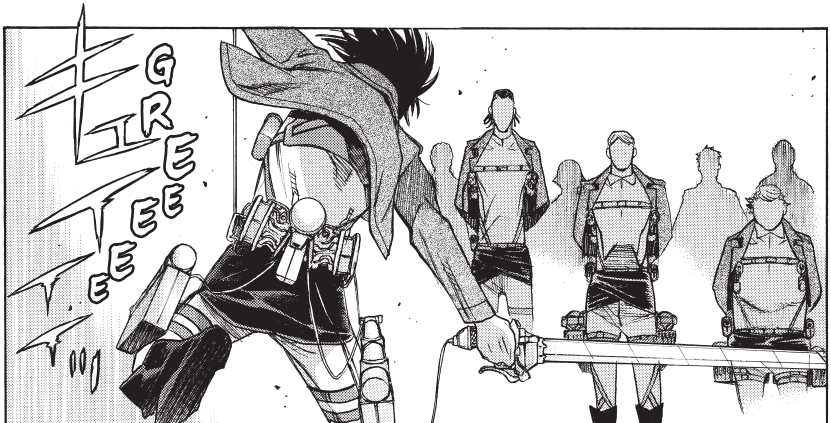

WHIFF
FLIK
SHWAK
TUP





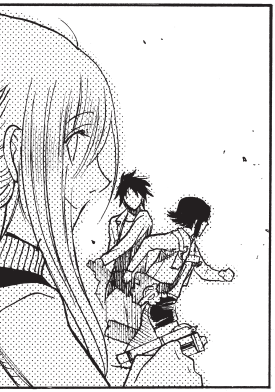


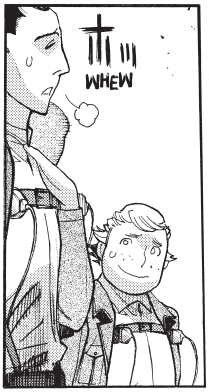


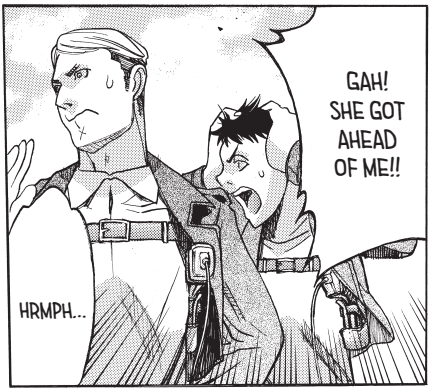

キGRE
EEEE

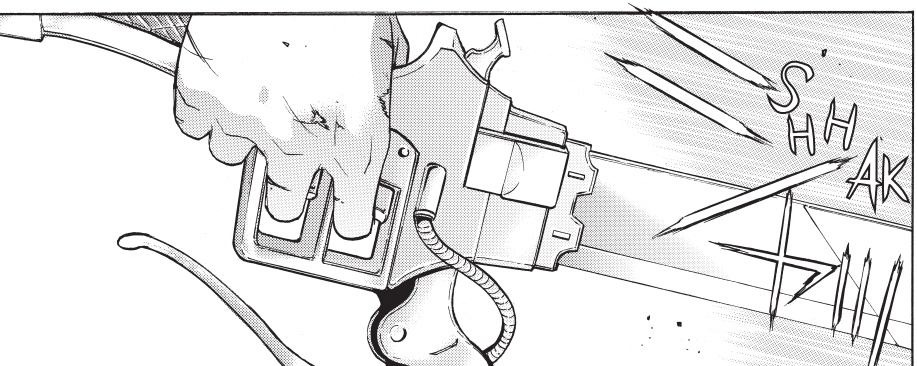
BUT THE FINISHING BLOW SHOULD ALWAYS BE THE BACK OF THE TITAN'S NECK!
WE SUSPECT THAT ITS WEAKEST POINT IS AT THE NAPE OF THE NECK, BEHIND ITS HEAD!
THAT WAS JUST AN EXAMPLE!
YOU DON'T NEED TO IMITATE MY AP-PROACH!
YOU MUST TEST OUT YOUR OWN WAY OF DOING IT!
KEEP THE TITAN'S MOBILITY IN YOUR MIND'S EYE AND ENGAGE AS IF YOU EXPECT IT TO MOVE!!
UNLIKE THIS MODEL, A REAL TITAN WILL MOVE AROUND, AND CAN TAKE A HUMAN LIFE JUST FROM A SWING OF ITS ARM OR FIST!!
DO NOT GET SLOPPY, JUST BECAUSE THIS IS TRAINING!
ME!
UP FIRST...
ごくり
GULP

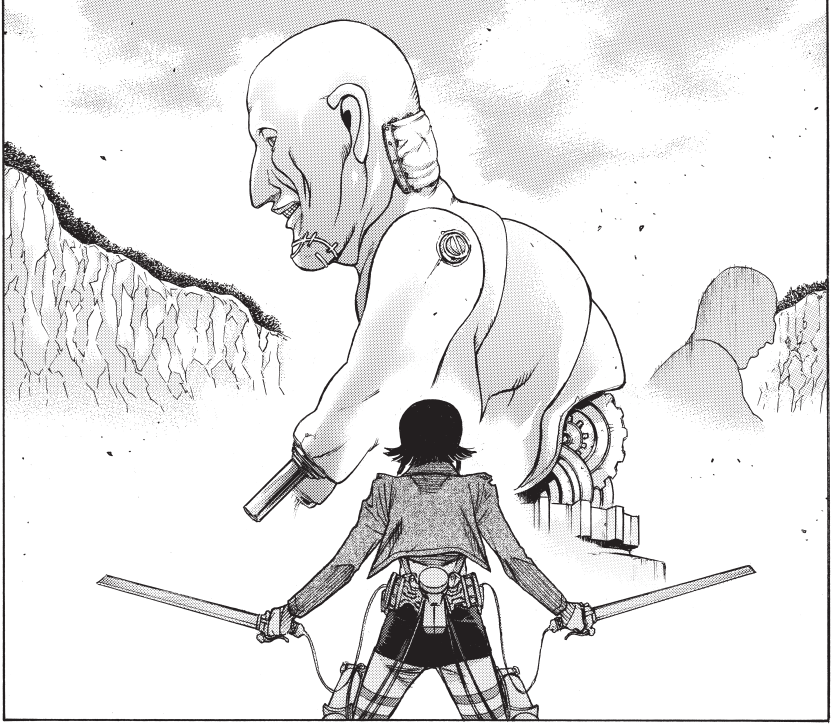
I'LL GO FIRST.

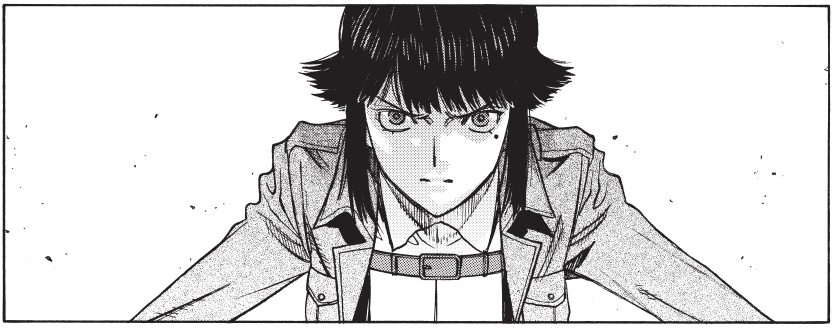


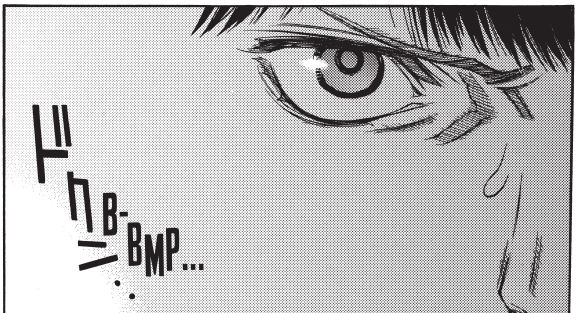

WHEW

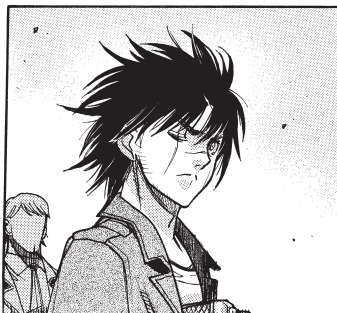

GAH! SHE GOT AHEAD OF ME!!
HRMPH...


SHHAK





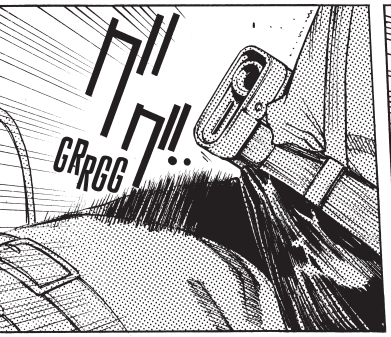

ドクン B-BMP...

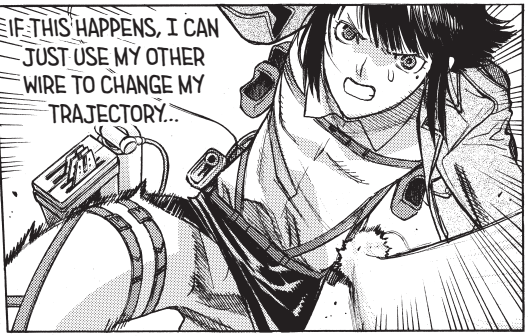


B-BMP
B-BMP
...STAY CALM...
B-BMP
STAY CALM...!
BA
ROSA CARLSTEAD, READY FOR ACTION!!!
SHH

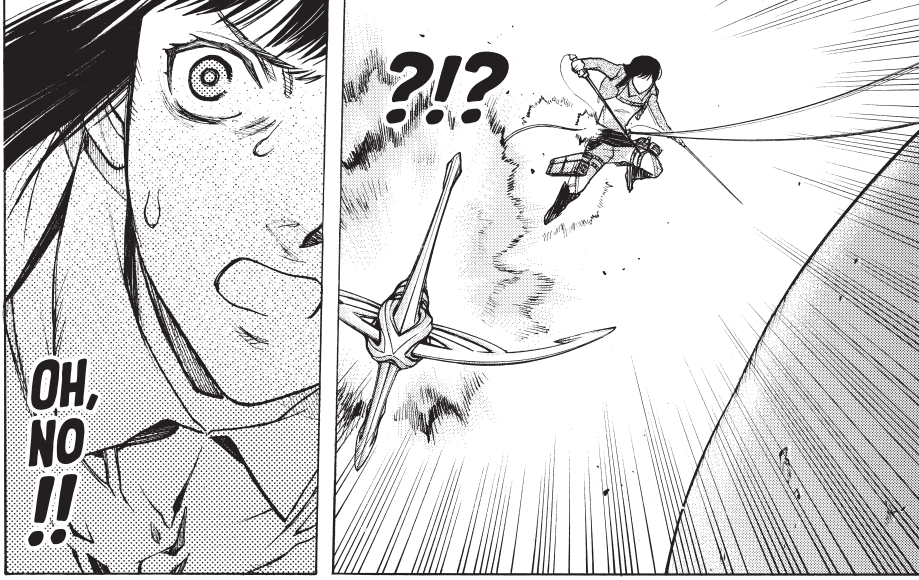
!
WAS THAT TOO LOW?
OH, WHATEVER!!
GAK
PSHOO
BOOM
JUST GO !!

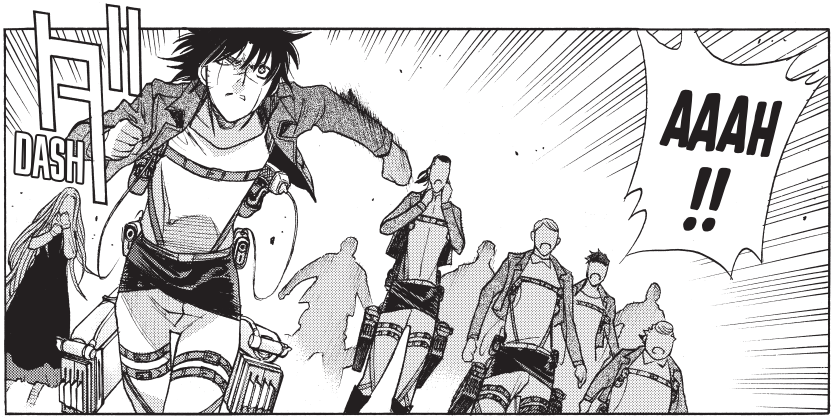
BOOOM

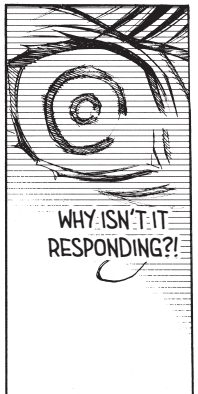

GRRGG

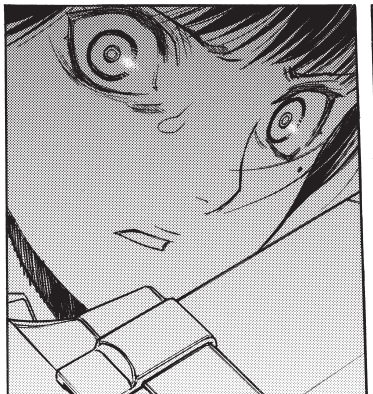

IF THIS HAPPENS, I CAN JUST USE MY OTHER WIRE TO CHANGE MY TRAJECTORY...

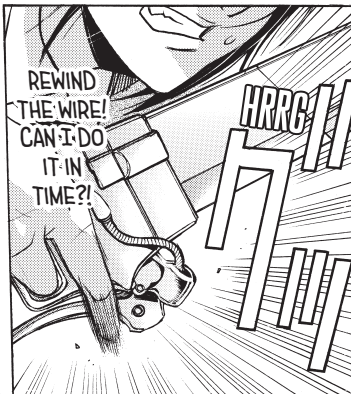
BHOOM


?!?
OH, NO !!

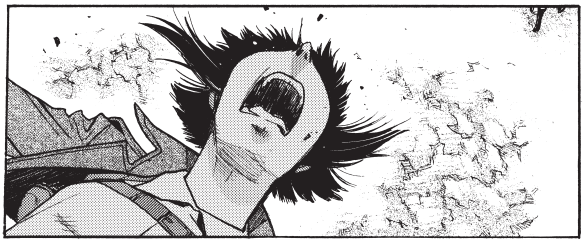

DASH
AAAH !!

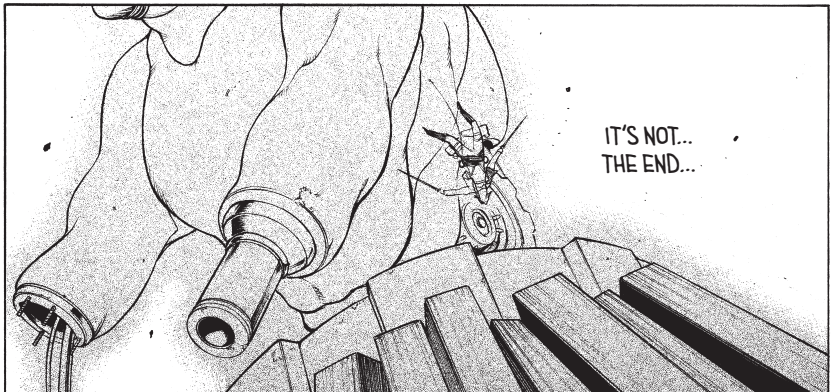

WHY ISN'T IT RESPONDING?!




REWIND THE WIRE! CAN I DO IT IN TIME?!
HRRG!

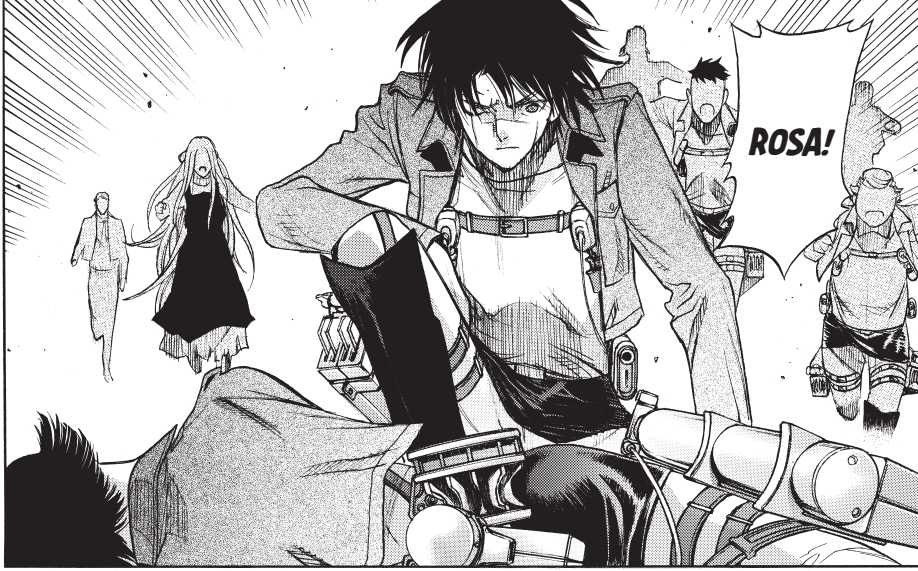
DOOMPH

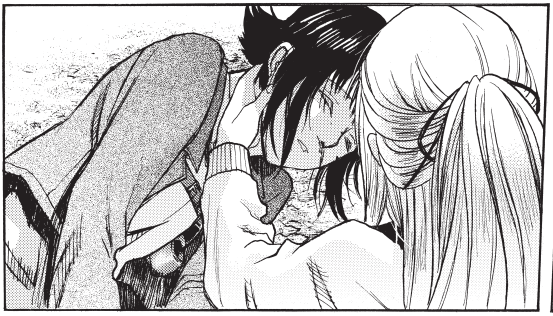


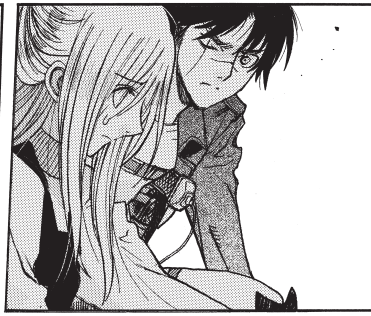


HRNG
I'M NOT GONNA DIE HERE !!!
GRETE
ZWOOP

BOOM
CRUNKK
STEADY, NOW.
NO!
THUMP
KCHLINK


ROSA!

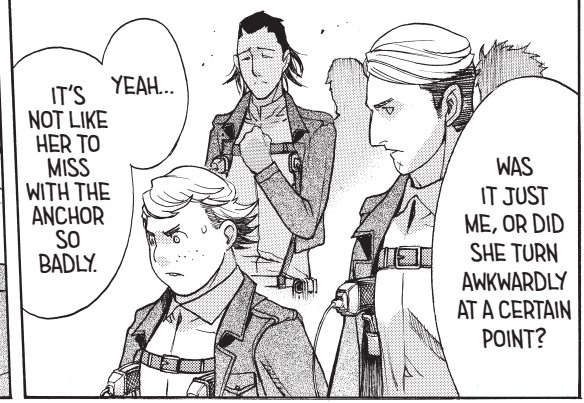


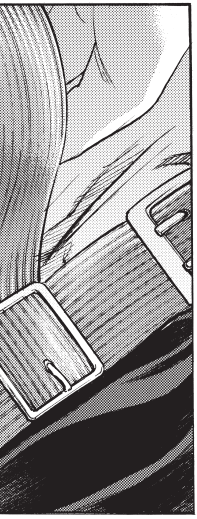


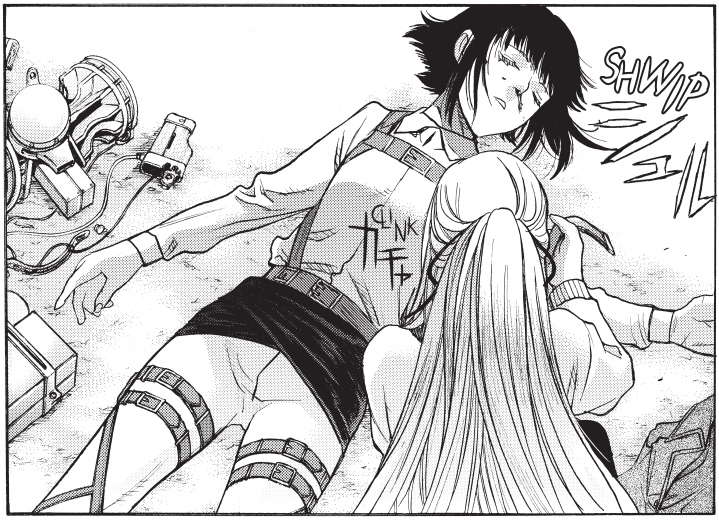
BUT WE SHOULD GET A CLOSER LOOK AT WHAT SHE STRUCK, LATER...

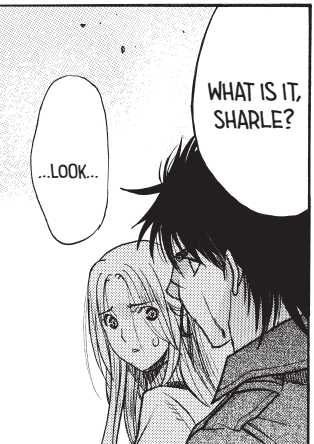
SHE'S ONLY KNOCKED OUT.

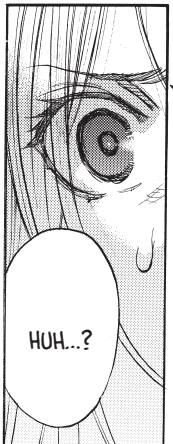
...

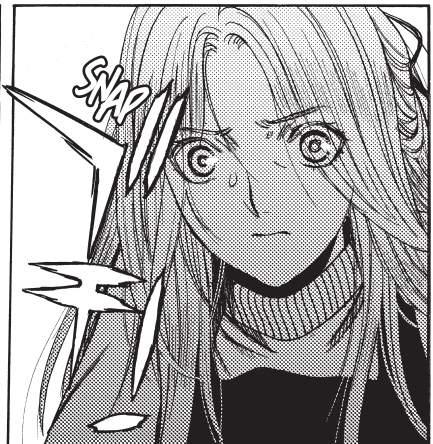

YEAH...
IT'S NOT LIKE HER TO MISS WITH THE ANCHOR SO BADLY.
WAS IT JUST ME, OR DID SHE TURN AWKWARDLY AT A CERTAIN POINT?

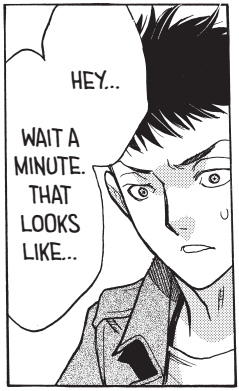


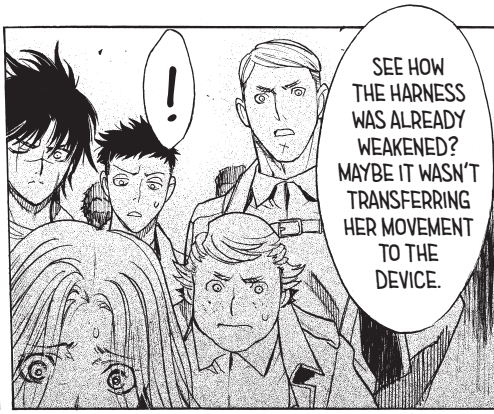

SHWIP
CLINK
ガチャ


WHAT IS IT, SHARLE?
...LOOK...


HUH...?


SNAP


HEY...
WAIT A MINUTE. THAT LOOKS LIKE...

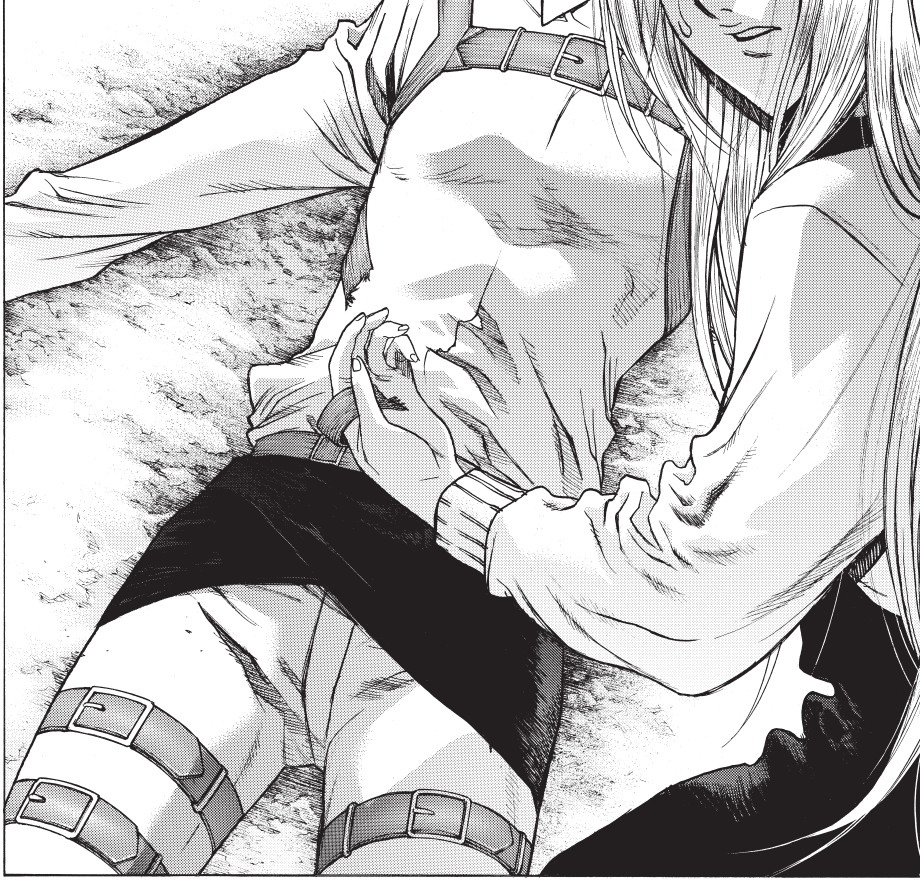

!
SEE HOW THE HARNESS WAS ALREADY WEAKENED? MAYBE IT WASN'T TRANSFERRING HER MOVEMENT TO THE DEVICE.

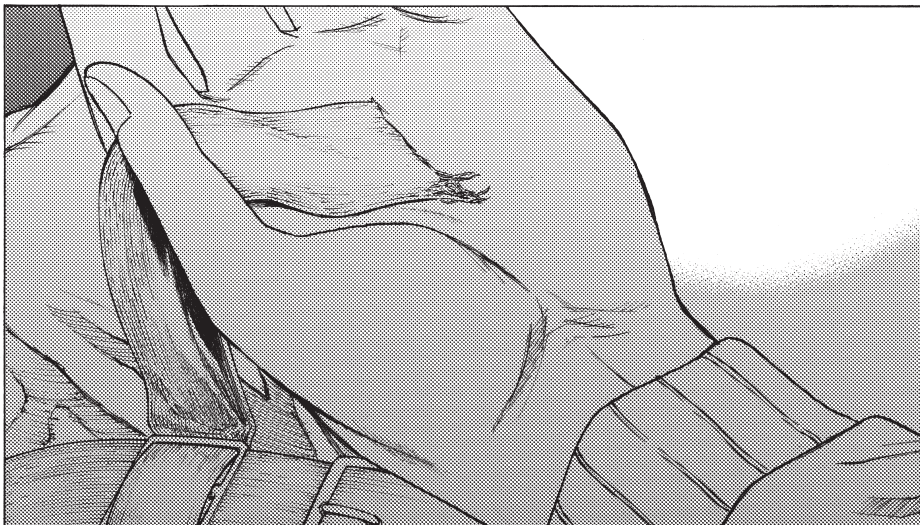
...IT WAS SCORED WITH A KNIFE...

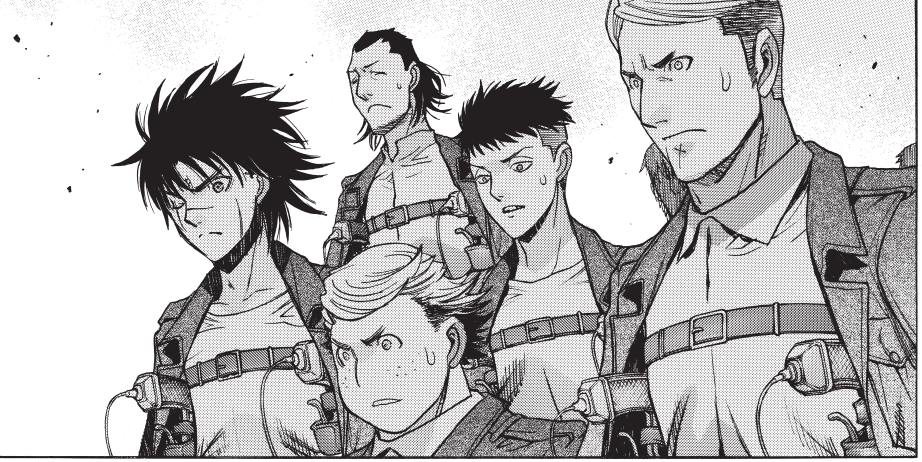
Chapter 53: Setback at the Initiation · End

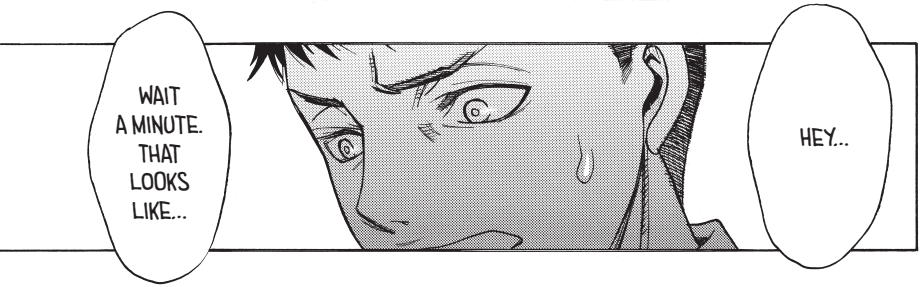
ATTACK ON TITAN
BEFORE THE FALL

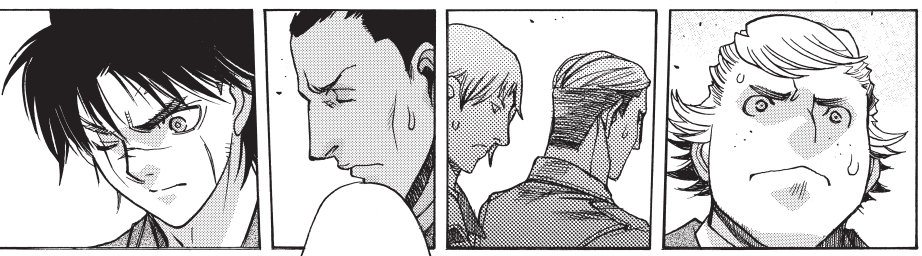
SNAP
HUH ...?
...LOOK...
WHAT IS IT, SHARLE?





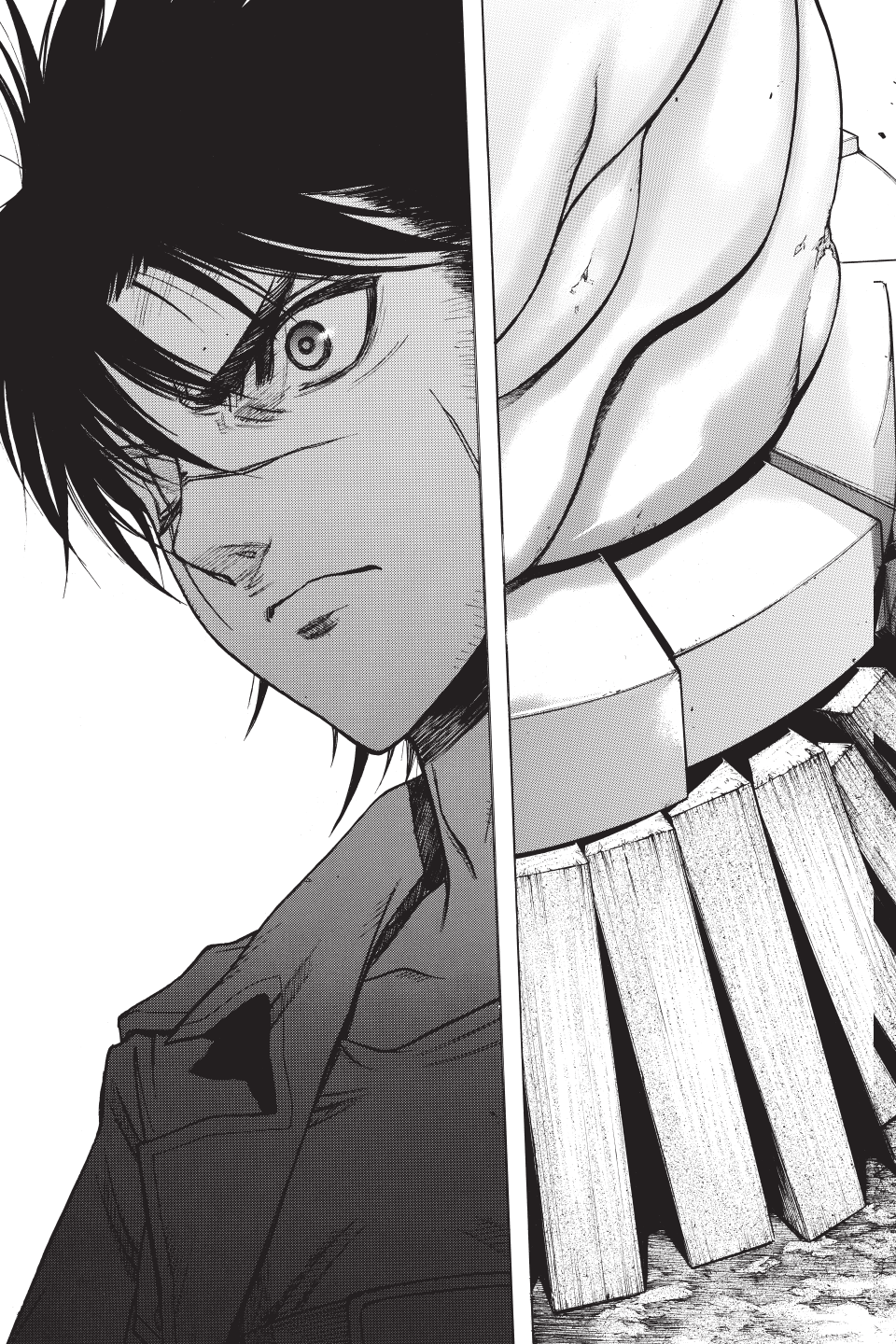


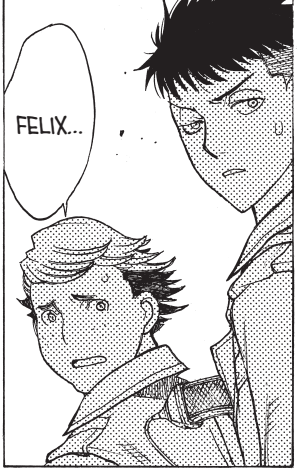

HEY...
WAIT A MINUTE. THAT LOOKS LIKE...

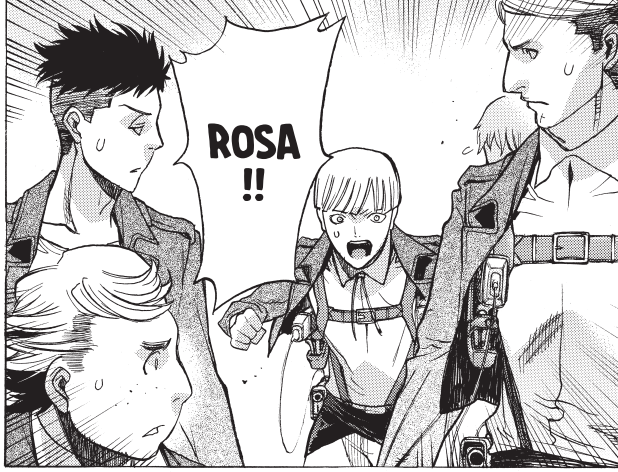


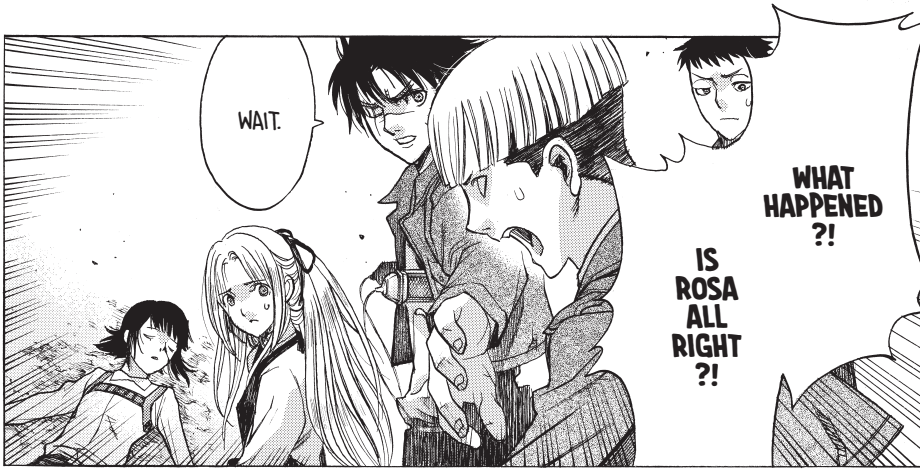
...IT WAS SCORED WITH A KNIFE...
D-DO YOU THINK...

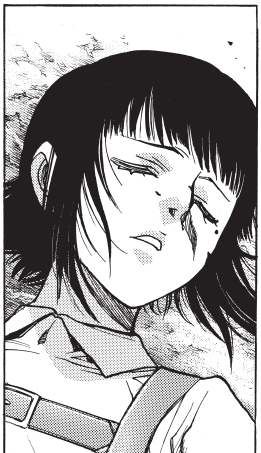
Chapter 54: In the Thick of Paranoia

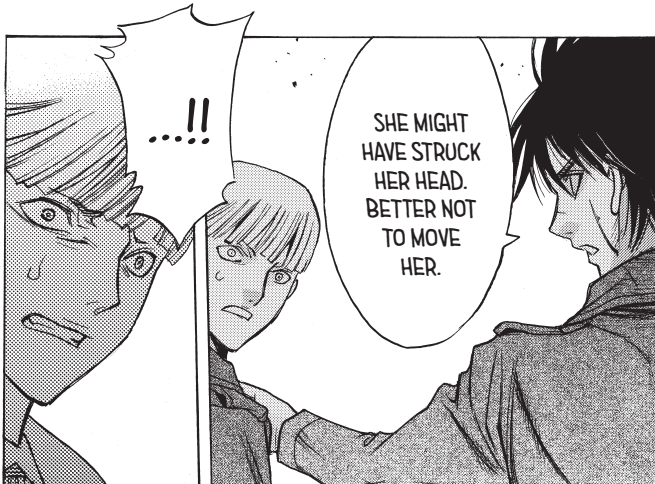


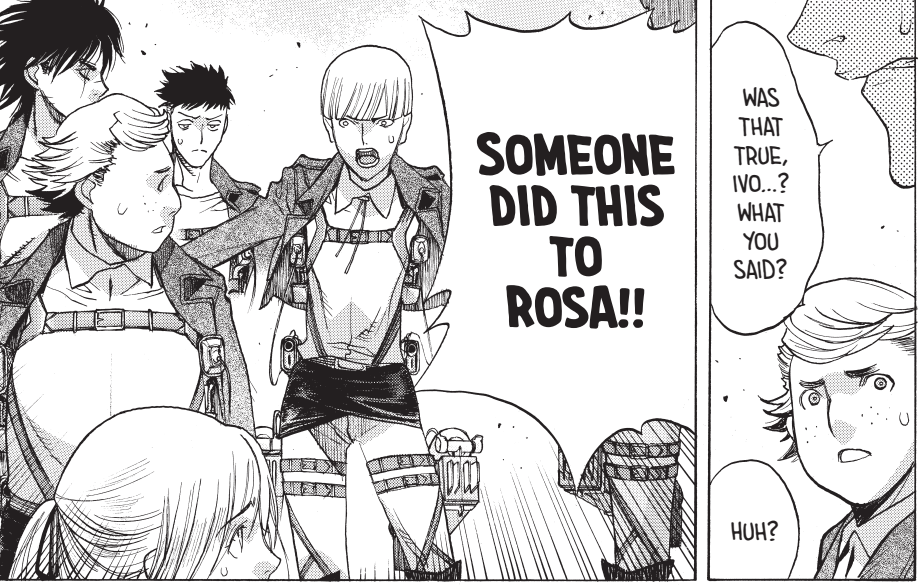

FELIX...

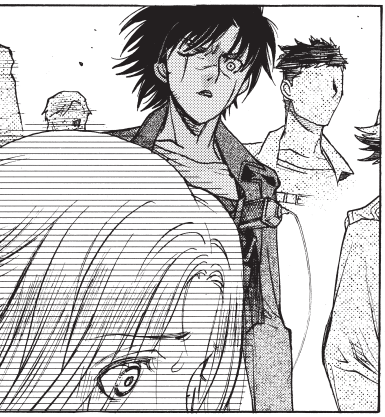

ROSA !!

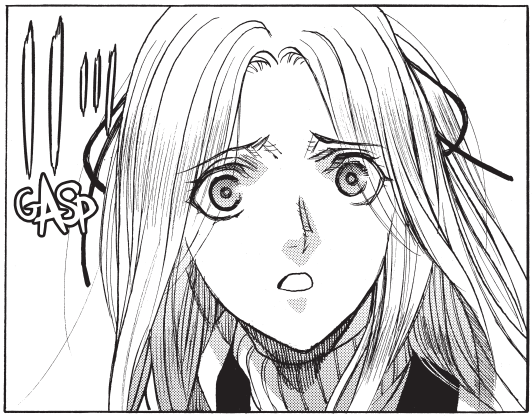

WAIT.
WHAT HAPPENED ?!
IS ROSA ALL RIGHT ?!

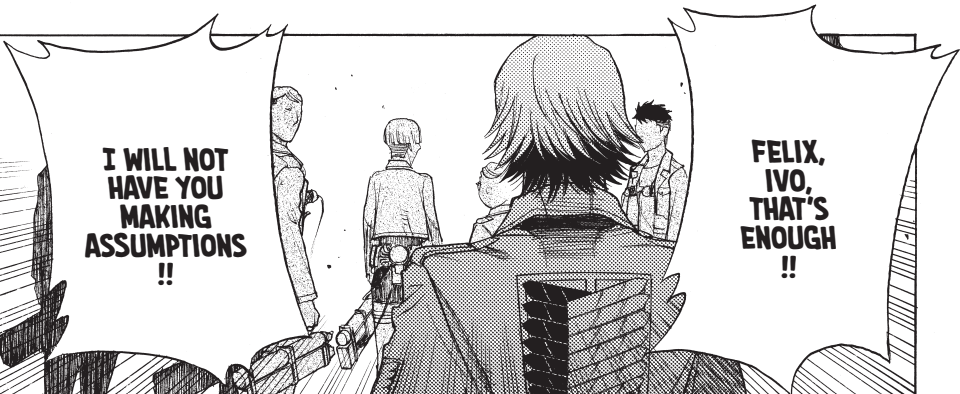


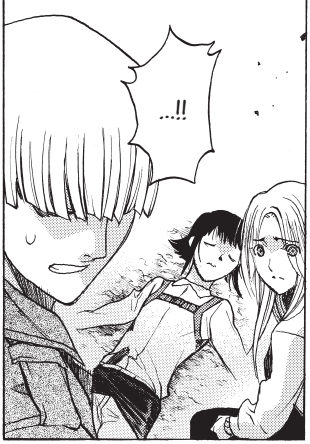

...!!
SHE MIGHT HAVE STRUCK HER HEAD. BETTER NOT TO MOVE HER.

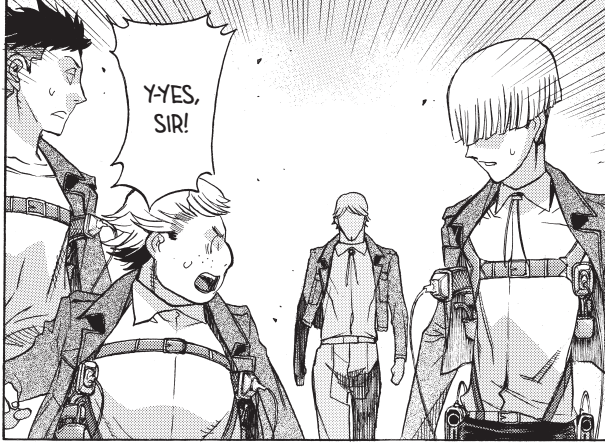

SOMEONE DID THIS TO ROSA!!
WAS THAT TRUE, IVO...? WHAT YOU SAID?
HUH?

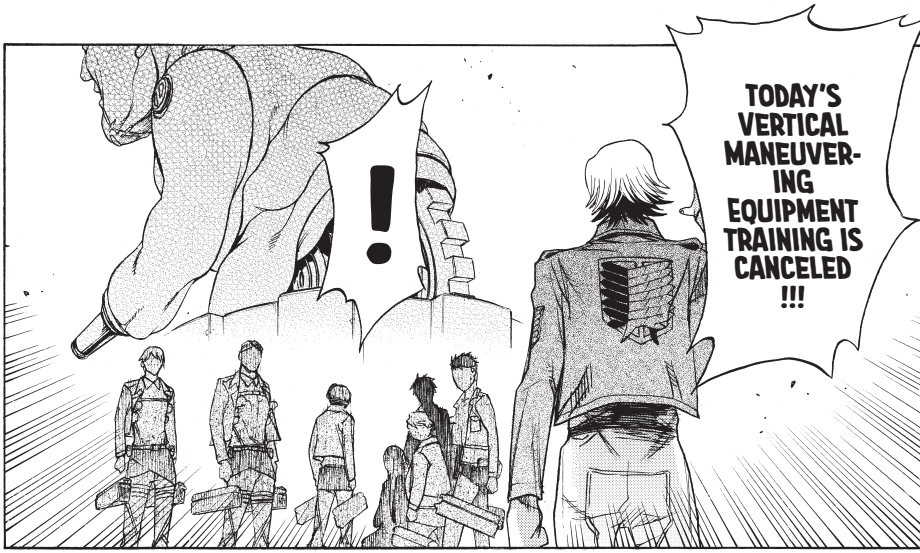


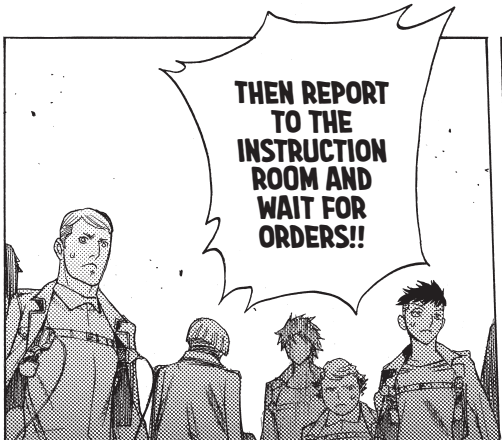

GASP


I WILL NOT HAVE YOU MAKING ASSUMPTIONS !!
FELIX, IVO, THAT'S ENOUGH !!


...!!

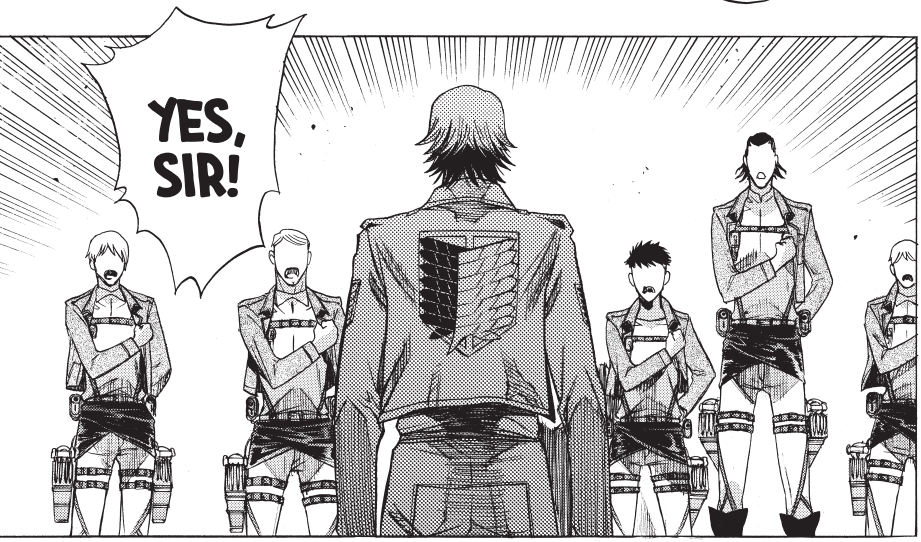

Y-YES, SIR!

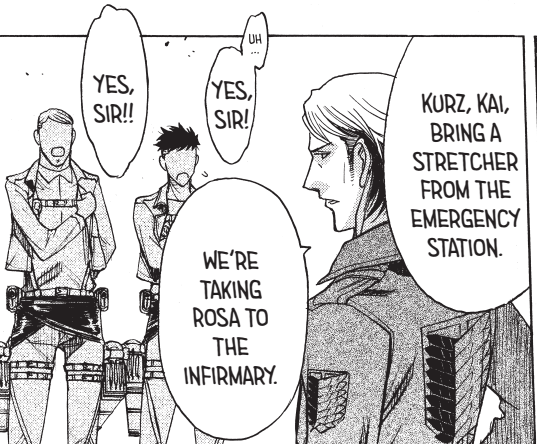

!
TODAY'S VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT TRAINING IS CANCELED !!!


THEN REPORT TO THE INSTRUCTION ROOM AND WAIT FOR ORDERS!!

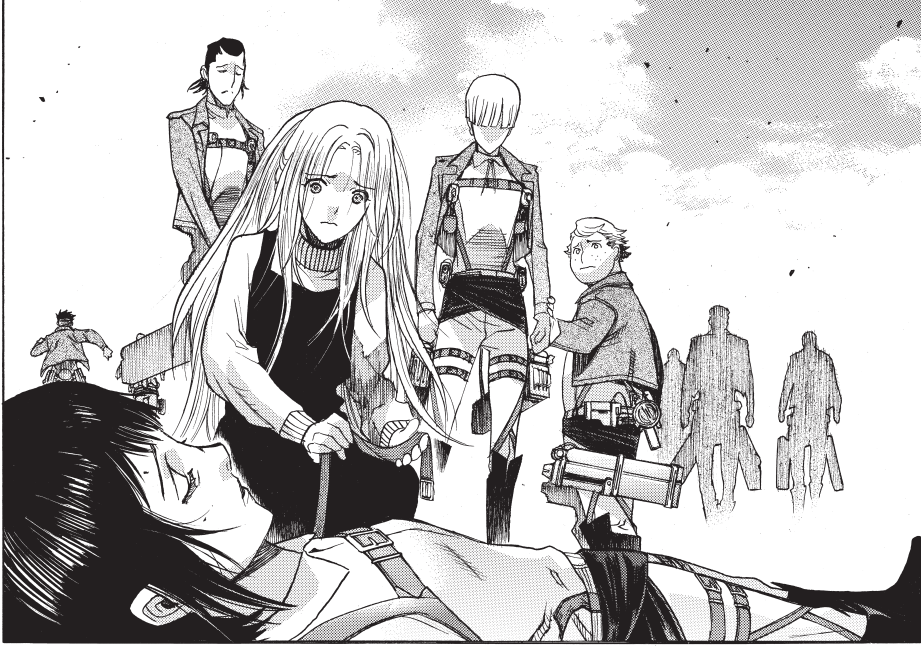
RETURN YOUR EQUIPMENT TO THE ARMORY AT THE MAIN BUILDING FOR INSPECTION!

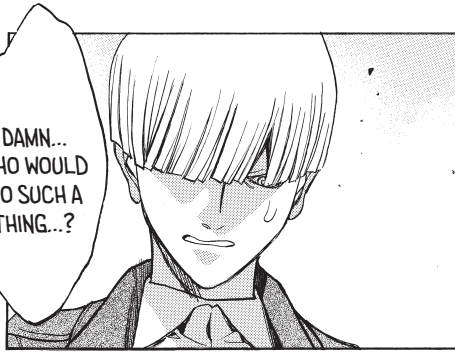
ALSO... UNTIL THERE IS AN OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT, YOU WILL NOT SPEAK OF WHAT YOU SAW OR HEARD HERE.

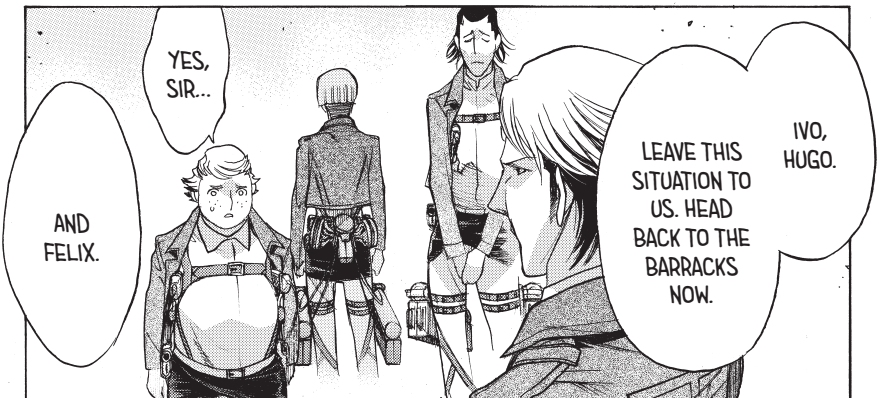

YES, SIR!

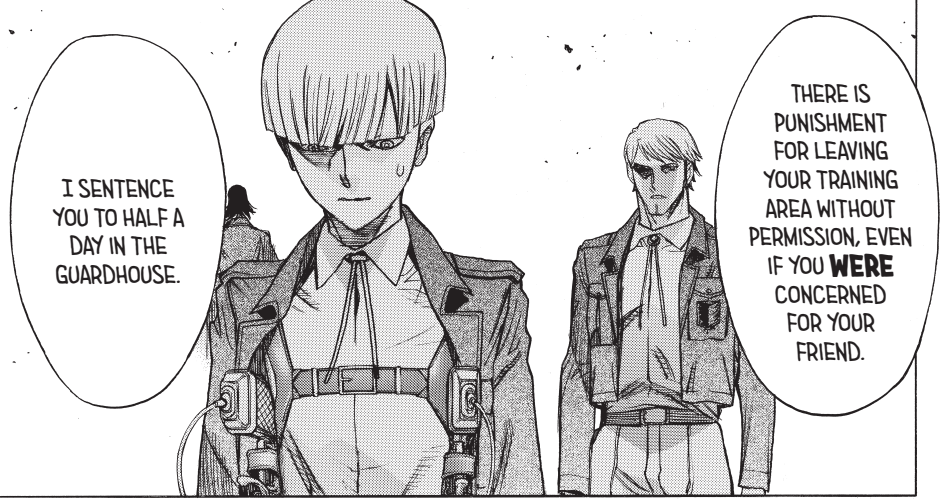

YES, SIR!!
UH...
YES, SIR!
WE'RE TAKING ROSA TO THE INFIRMARY.
KURZ, KAI, BRING A STRETCHER FROM THE EMERGENCY STATION.

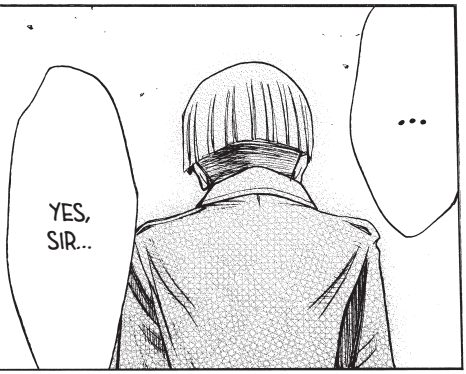
THE SAME WILL BE TRUE OF THE TERTIARY GROUP, KLOW.
GO AND TELL CARL.
I WILL.

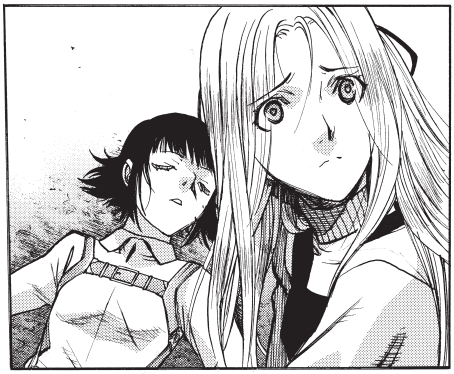


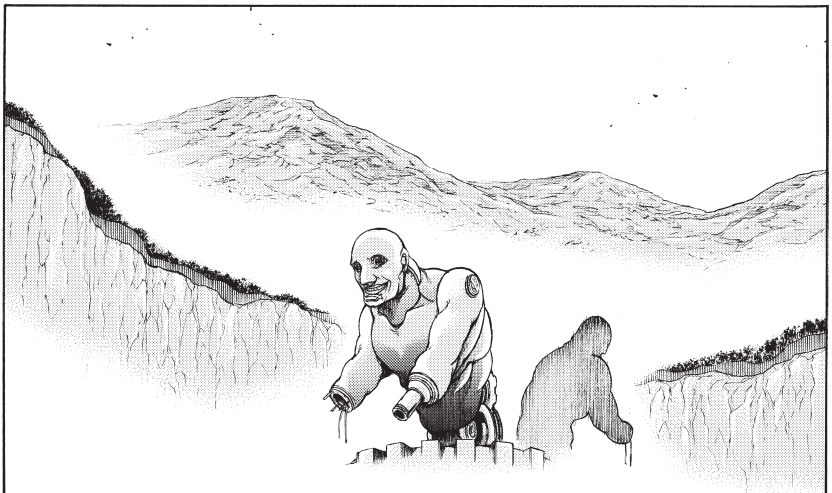

DAMN... WHO WOULD DO SUCH A THING...?

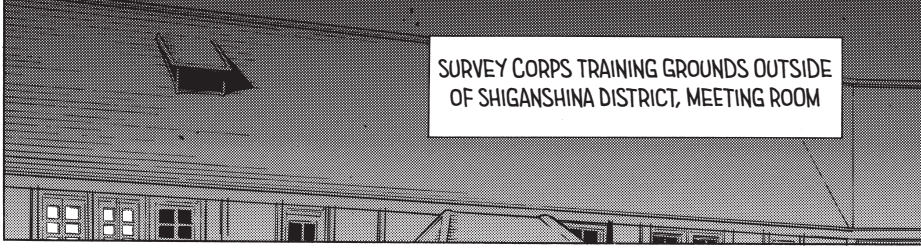

IVO, HUGO.
LEAVE THIS SITUATION TO US. HEAD BACK TO THE BARRACKS NOW.
YES, SIR...
AND FELIX.


I SENTENCE YOU TO HALF A DAY IN THE GUARDHOUSE.
THERE IS PUNISHMENT FOR LEAVING YOUR TRAINING AREA WITHOUT PERMISSION, EVEN IF YOU **WERE** CONCERNED FOR YOUR FRIEND.


YES, SIR...
...

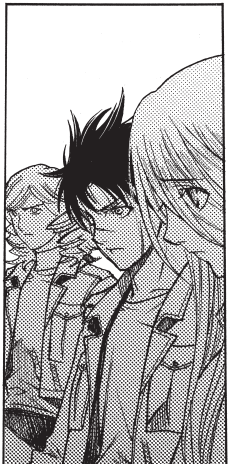


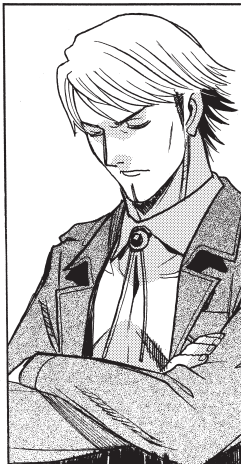


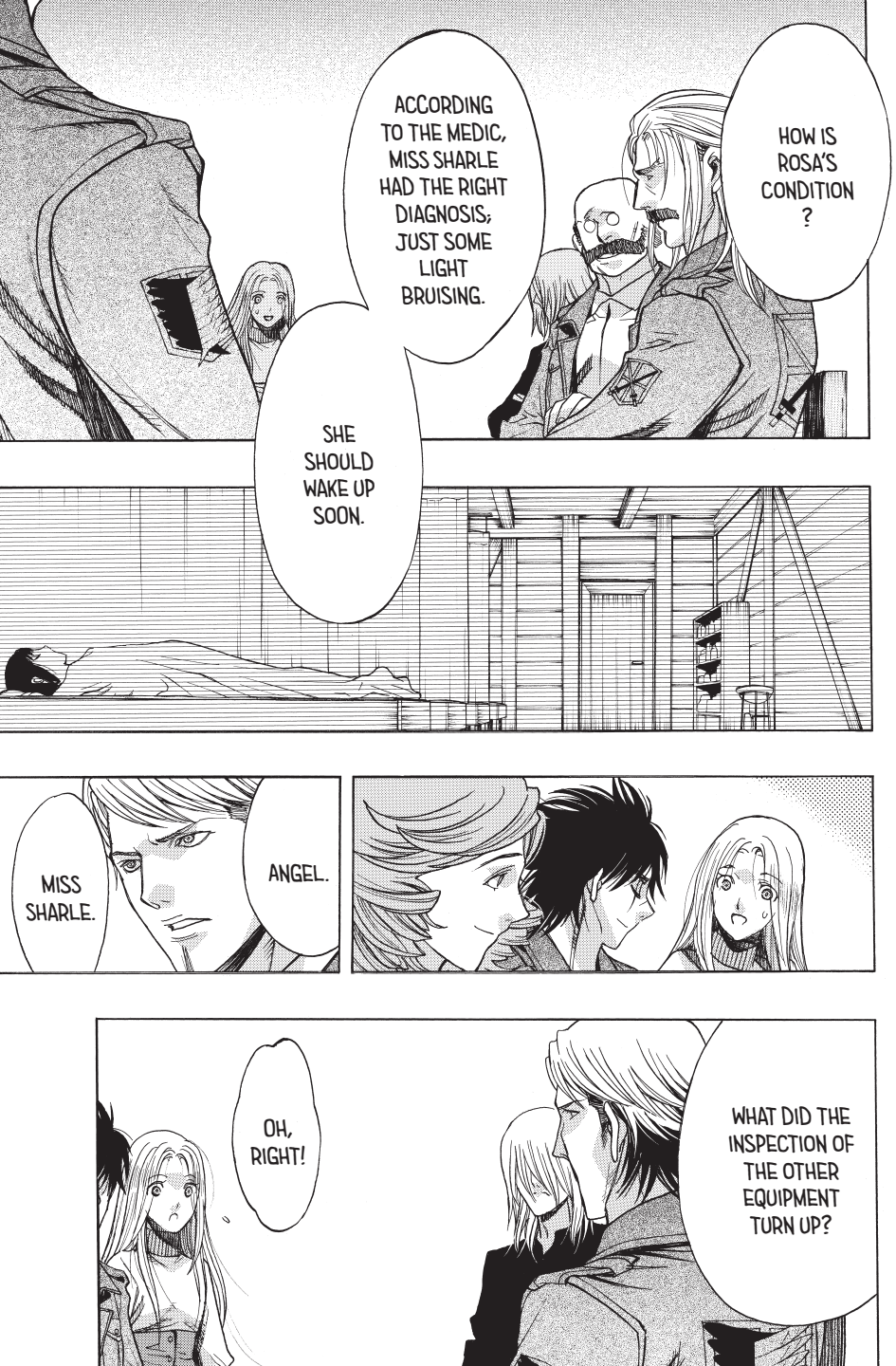

SURVEY CORPS TRAINING GROUNDS OUTSIDE OF SHIGANSHINA DISTRICT, MEETING ROOM

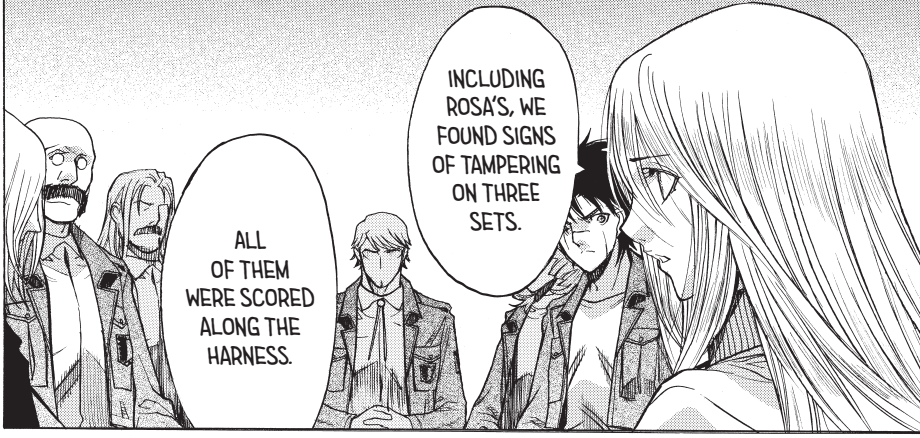
THUMP

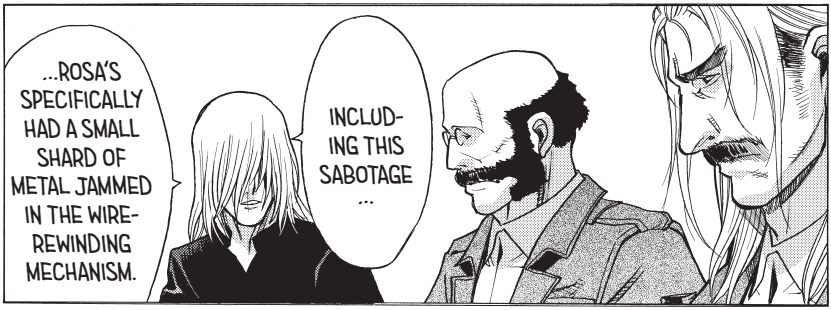
SO...

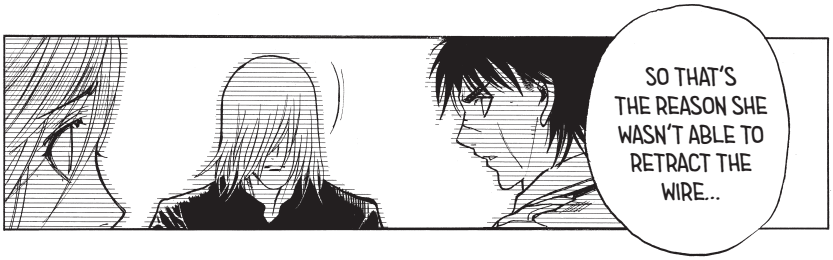




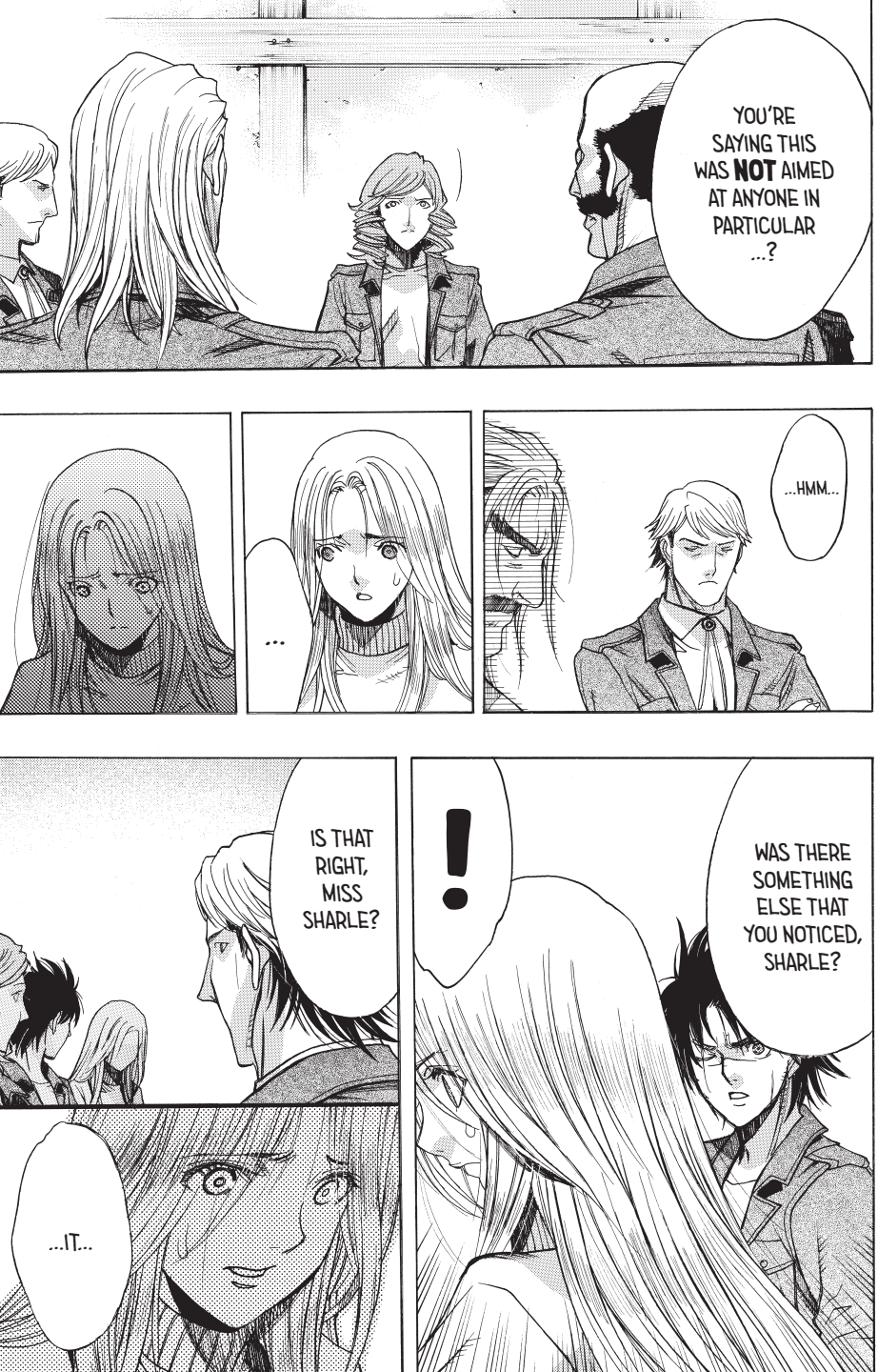

HOW IS ROSA'S CONDITION ?
ACCORDING TO THE MEDIC, MISS SHARLE HAD THE RIGHT DIAGNOSIS; JUST SOME LIGHT BRUISING.
SHE SHOULD WAKE UP SOON.
ANGEL.
MISS SHARLE.
WHAT DID THE INSPECTION OF THE OTHER EQUIPMENT TURN UP?
OH, RIGHT!


ALL OF THEM WERE SCORED ALONG THE HARNESS.
INCLUDING ROSA'S, WE FOUND SIGNS OF TAMPERING ON THREE SETS.


...ROSA'S SPECIFICALLY HAD A SMALL SHARD OF METAL JAMMED IN THE WIRE-REWINDING MECHANISM.
INCLUD-ING THIS SABOTAGE ...

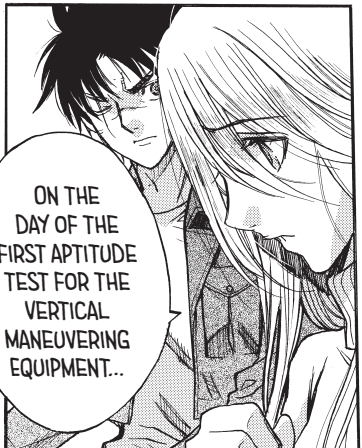

SO THAT'S THE REASON SHE WASN'T ABLE TO RETRACT THE WIRE...

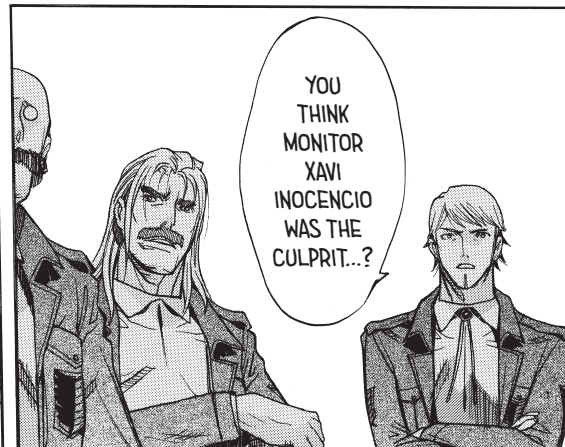
...THE USERS OF THE THREE SABOTAGED UNITS DID NOT HAVE ANY COMMON FEATURES, SUCH AS PERSONAL ACQUAINTANCE OR SHARED BIRTHPLACE.
ALSO, FROM WHAT WE WERE ABLE TO ASCERTAIN...

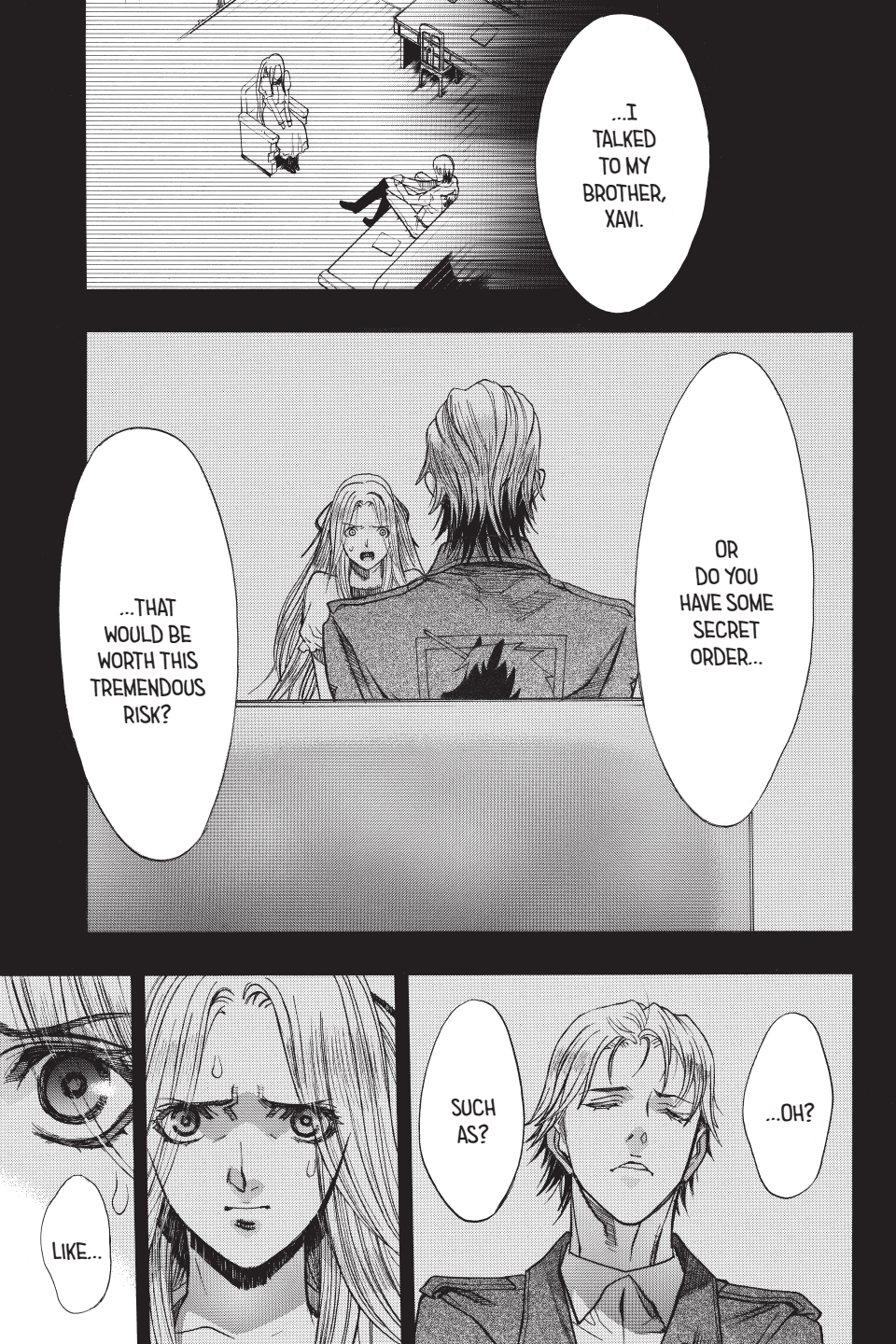

YOU'RE SAYING THIS WAS **NOT** AIMED AT ANYONE IN PARTICULAR ...?
...
...HMM...
IS THAT RIGHT, MISS SHARLE?
!
WAS THERE SOMETHING ELSE THAT YOU NOTICED, SHARLE?
...IT...

IT MIGHT ...

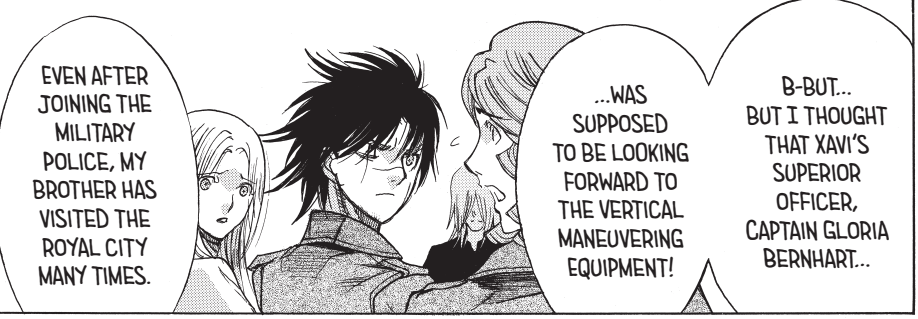
IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN MY BROTHER.

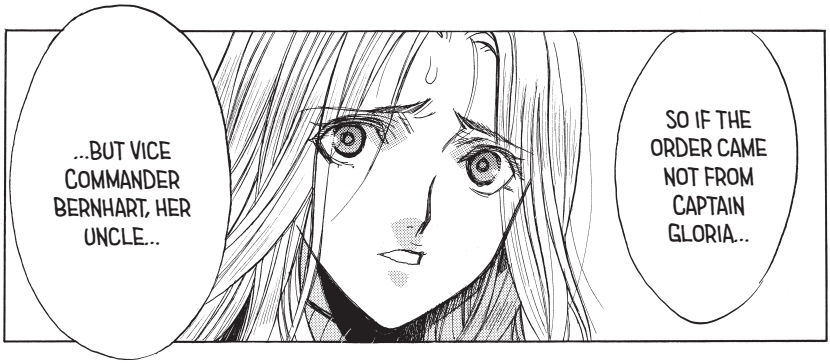

ON THE DAY OF THE FIRST APTITUDE TEST FOR THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT...

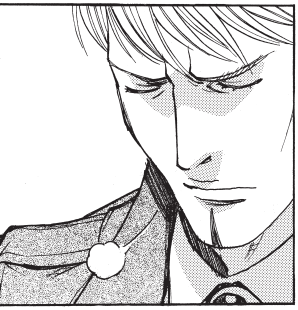

YOU THINK MONITOR XAVI INOCENCIO WAS THE CULPRIT...?

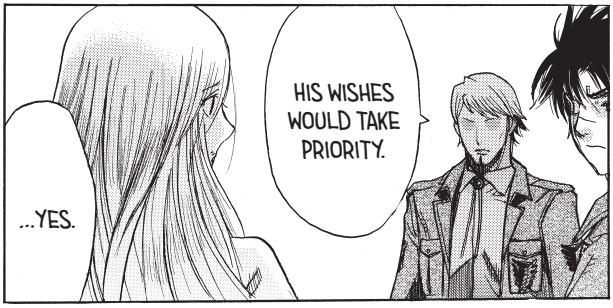

...I TALKED TO MY BROTHER, XAVI.
...THAT WOULD BE WORTH THIS TREMENDOUS RISK?
OR DO YOU HAVE SOME SECRET ORDER...
LIKE...
SUCH AS?
...OH?

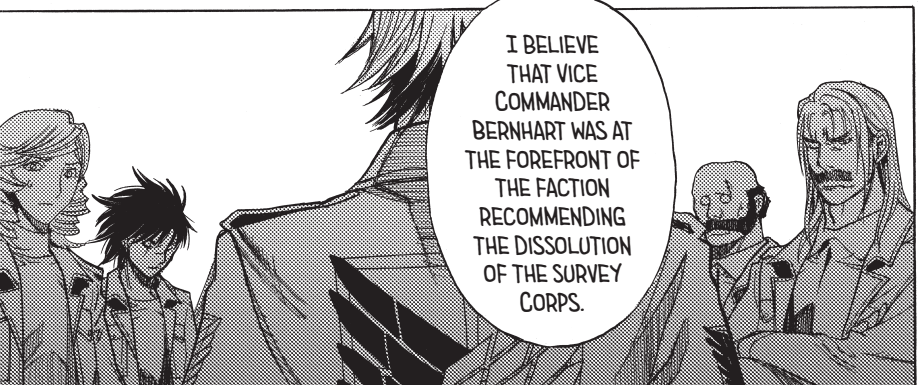
LIKE ENSURING THAT THE SURVEY CORPS'S EXPEDITION IS A FAILURE...
!!
HMM...
MY BROTHER ONLY SMILED AT MY SUGGESTION. HE NEITHER AFFIRMED NOR DENIED IT.

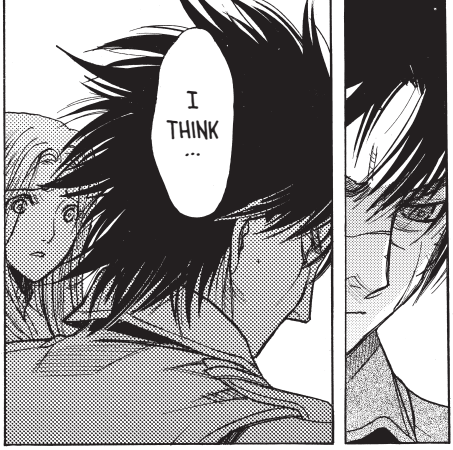

EVEN AFTER JOINING THE MILITARY POLICE, MY BROTHER HAS VISITED THE ROYAL CITY MANY TIMES.
...WAS SUPPOSED TO BE LOOKING FORWARD TO THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT!
B-BUT... BUT I THOUGHT THAT XAVI'S SUPERIOR OFFICER, CAPTAIN GLORIA BERNHART...

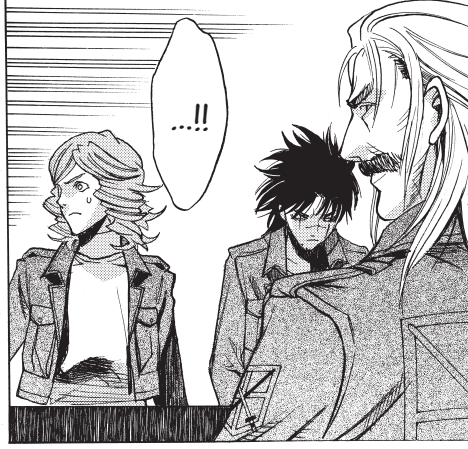

...BUT VICE COMMANDER BERNHART, HER UNCLE...
SO IF THE ORDER CAME NOT FROM CAPTAIN GLORIA...

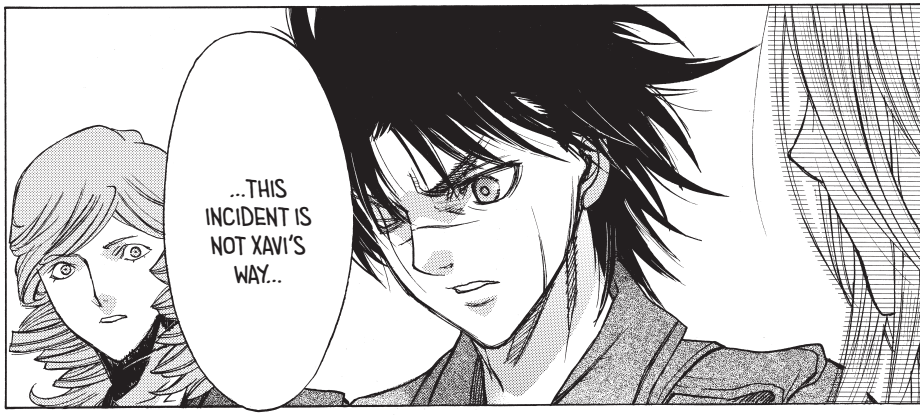



HIS WISHES WOULD TAKE PRIORITY.
...YES.


I BELIEVE THAT VICE COMMANDER BERNHART WAS AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE FACTION RECOMMENDING THE DISSOLUTION OF THE SURVEY CORPS.

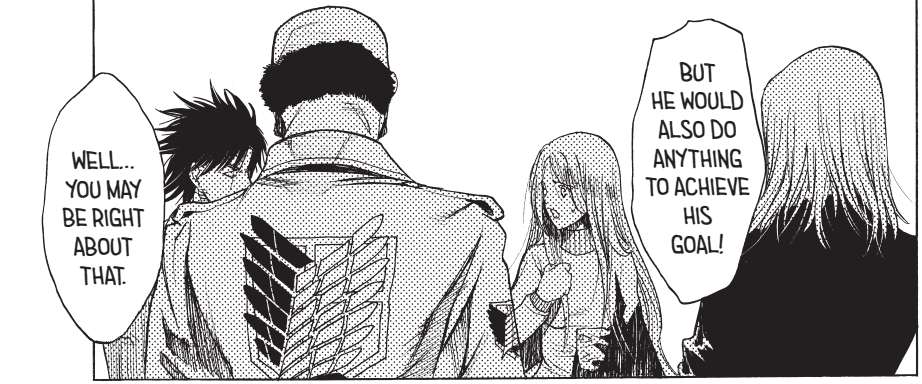

I THINK ...

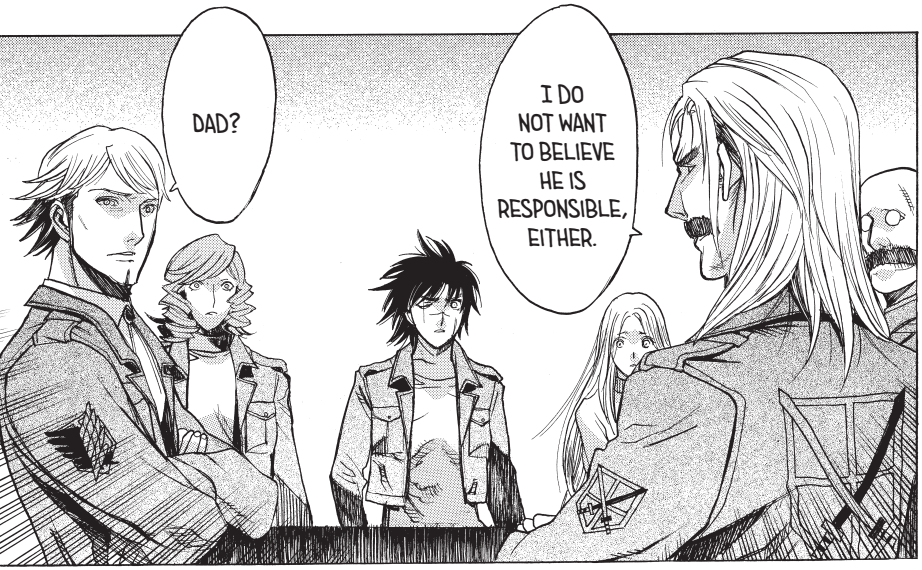

...!!

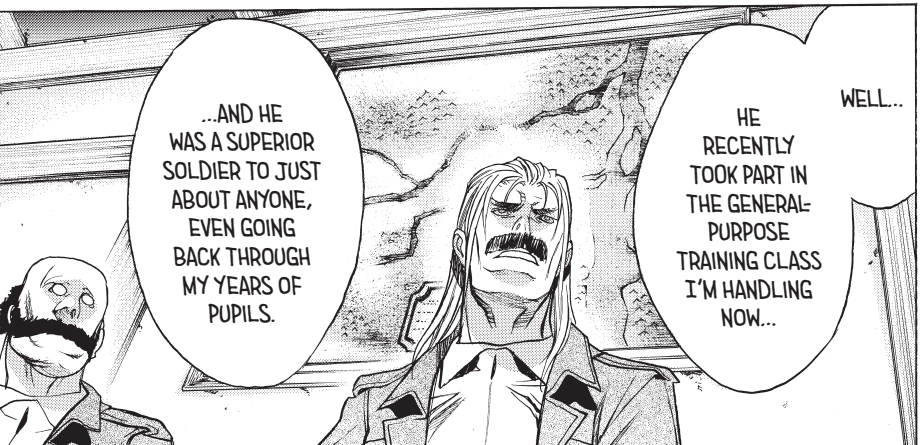

...THIS INCIDENT IS NOT XAVI'S WAY...

WHEN HE HAS HIS TARGET, HE BEATS THEM DIRECTLY, WITH SUPERIOR FORCE.
DOESN'T THAT SEEM MORE LIKE XAVI TO YOU?

KUKLO ...?
FOR BETTER OR WORSE ...

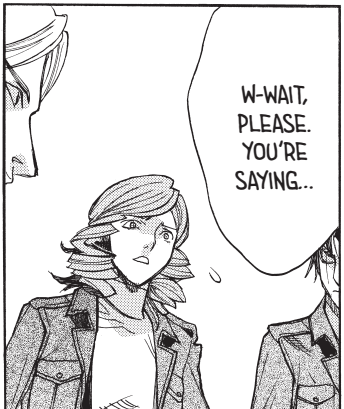

WELL... YOU MAY BE RIGHT ABOUT THAT.
BUT HE WOULD ALSO DO ANYTHING TO ACHIEVE HIS GOAL!

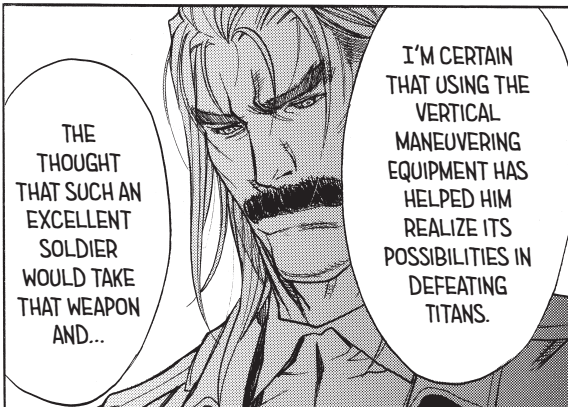

DAD?
I DO NOT WANT TO BELIEVE HE IS RESPONSIBLE, EITHER.

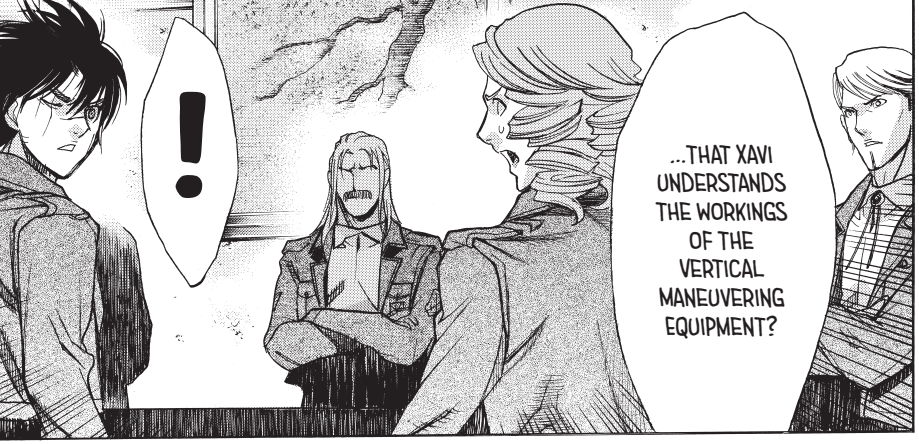

WELL...
HE RECENTLY TOOK PART IN THE GENERAL-PURPOSE TRAINING CLASS I'M HANDLING NOW...
...AND HE WAS A SUPERIOR SOLDIER TO JUST ABOUT ANYONE, EVEN GOING BACK THROUGH MY YEARS OF PUPILS.

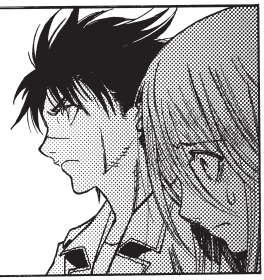
IT WASN'T JUST THE TRAINING. HE ALSO EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN LEARNING HOW TO USE THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT...
JUST HEAR ME OUT.
DAD--ER, INSTRUCTOR JORGE, THAT'S NOT ENOUGH TO...

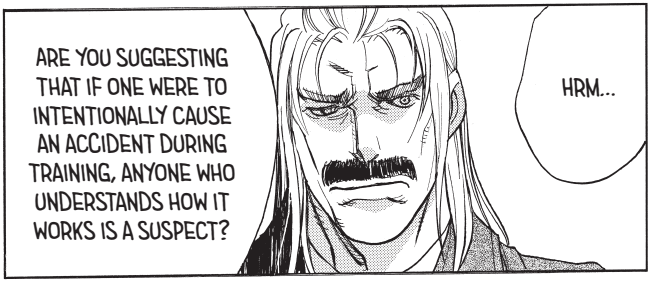
SO AFTER THE STANDARD TRAINING, I'VE BEEN GIVING HIM LESSONS WITH A SPARE UNIT.

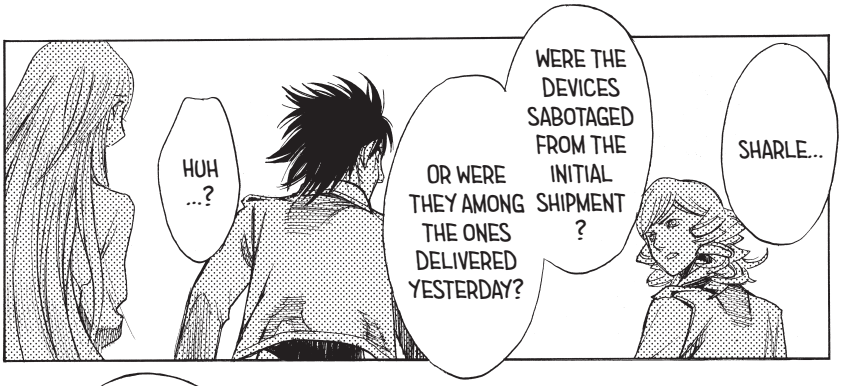

W-WAIT, PLEASE. YOU'RE SAYING...

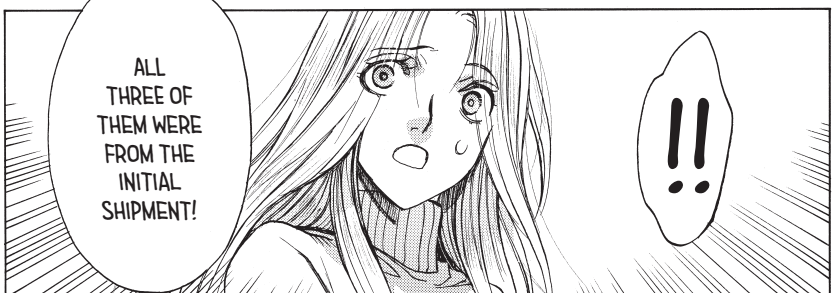

THE THOUGHT THAT SUCH AN EXCELLENT SOLDIER WOULD TAKE THAT WEAPON AND...
I'M CERTAIN THAT USING THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT HAS HELPED HIM REALIZE ITS POSSIBILITIES IN DEFEATING TITANS.

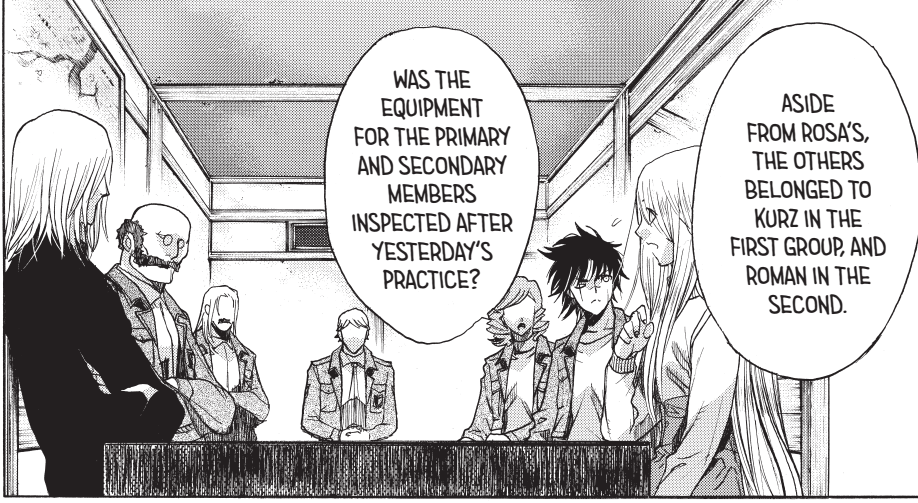

!
...THAT XAVI UNDERSTANDS THE WORKINGS OF THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT?

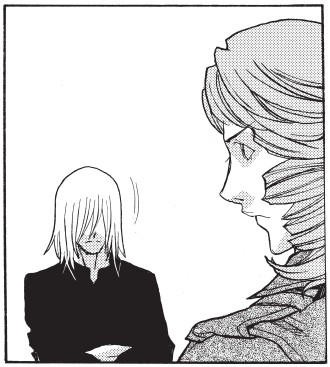


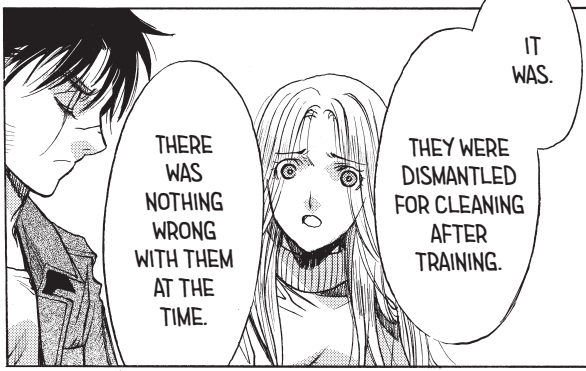

ARE YOU SUGGESTING THAT IF ONE WERE TO INTENTIONALLY CAUSE AN ACCIDENT DURING TRAINING, ANYONE WHO UNDERSTANDS HOW IT WORKS IS A SUSPECT?
HRM...

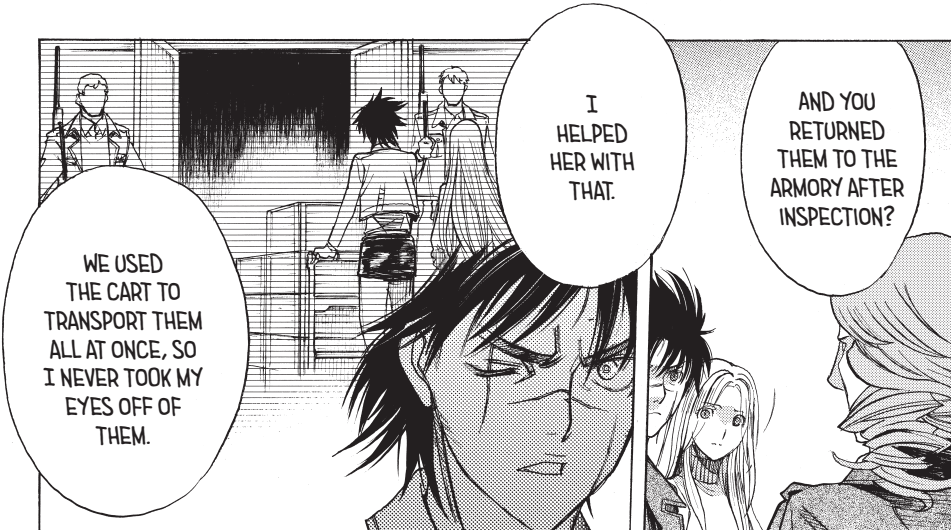

HUH ...?
OR WERE THEY AMONG THE ONES DELIVERED YESTERDAY?
WERE THE DEVICES SABOTAGED FROM THE INITIAL SHIPMENT ?
SHARLE...


ALL THREE OF THEM WERE FROM THE INITIAL SHIPMENT!
!!

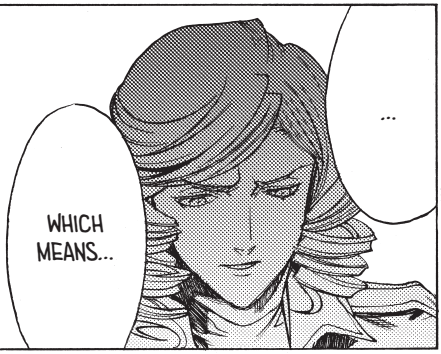

WAS THE EQUIPMENT FOR THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY MEMBERS INSPECTED AFTER YESTERDAY'S PRACTICE?
ASIDE FROM ROSA'S, THE OTHERS BELONGED TO KURZ IN THE FIRST GROUP, AND ROMAN IN THE SECOND.

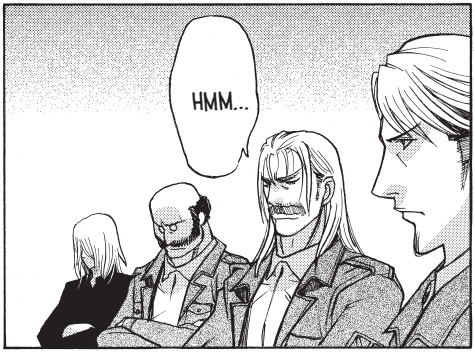



IT WAS.
THEY WERE DISMANTLED FOR CLEANING AFTER TRAINING.
THERE WAS NOTHING WRONG WITH THEM AT THE TIME.


AND YOU RETURNED THEM TO THE ARMORY AFTER INSPECTION?
I HELPED HER WITH THAT.
WE USED THE CART TO TRANSPORT THEM ALL AT ONCE, SO I NEVER TOOK MY EYES OFF OF THEM.

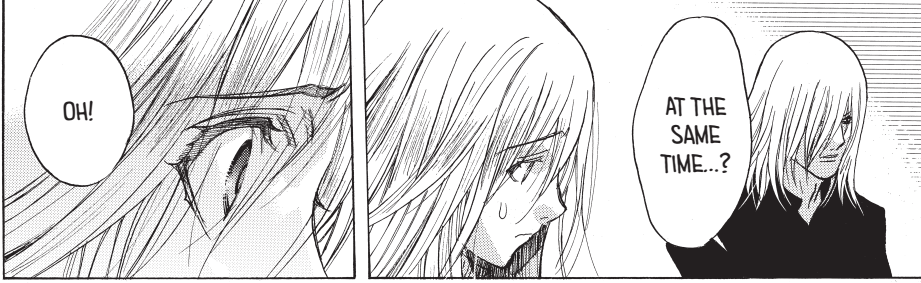
I KNOW WHERE THE KEY TO THE ARMORY IS...
...AND THERE WERE NO SIGNS OF IT BEING PRIED OPEN.

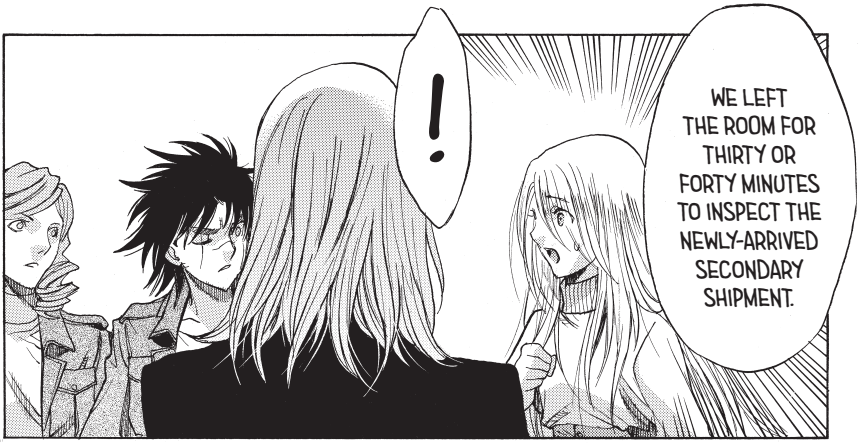

...
WHICH MEANS...

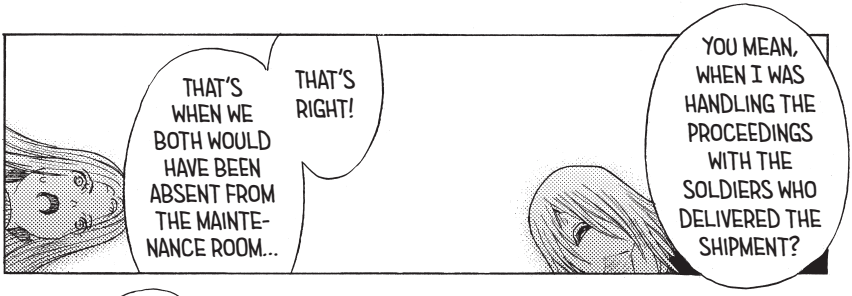

HMM...

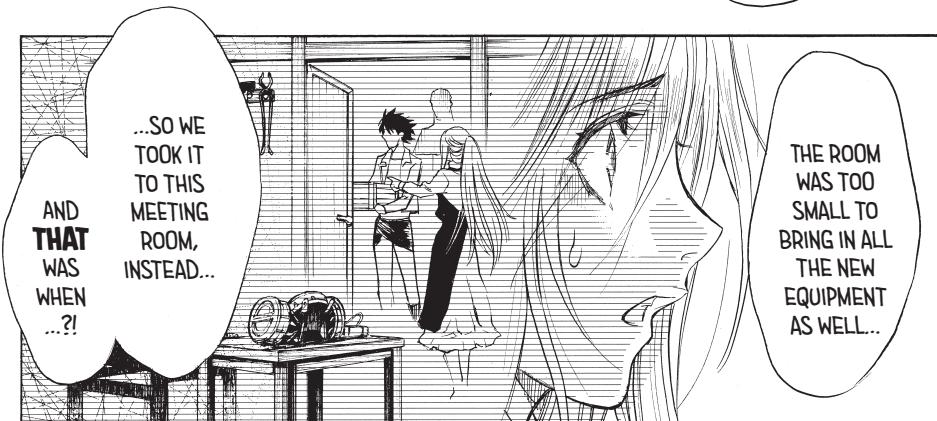
WAS THERE ANY TIME WHERE BOTH SHARLE AND ANGEL TOOK THEIR EYES OFF THE EQUIPMENT?

THE SABOTAGE COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN DONE IN THE MAINTENANCE ROOM ITSELF...


OH!
AT THE SAME TIME...?


!
WE LEFT THE ROOM FOR THIRTY OR FORTY MINUTES TO INSPECT THE NEWLY-ARRIVED SECONDARY SHIPMENT.


THAT'S WHEN WE BOTH WOULD HAVE BEEN ABSENT FROM THE MAINTE-NANCE ROOM...
THAT'S RIGHT!
YOU MEAN, WHEN I WAS HANDLING THE PROCEEDINGS WITH THE SOLDIERS WHO DELIVERED THE SHIPMENT?


AND **THAT** WAS WHEN ...?!
...SO WE TOOK IT TO THIS MEETING ROOM, INSTEAD...
THE ROOM WAS TOO SMALL TO BRING IN ALL THE NEW EQUIPMENT AS WELL...

I...

I'M SO SORRY !!

THUMP

KTHUMP

STOP.

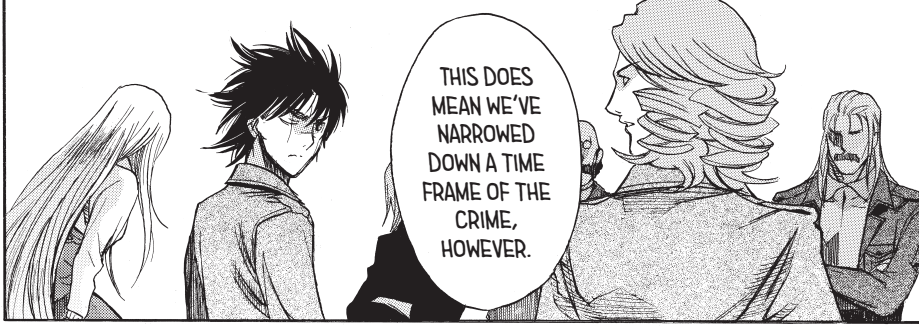
DON'T DO THIS, MISS SHARLE.

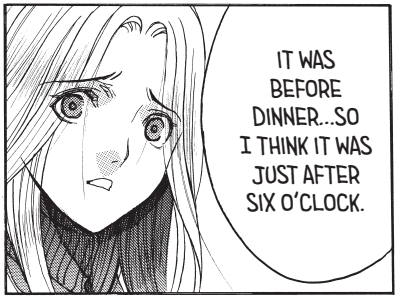
IT WAS OUR LACK OF CAUTION THAT CAUSED THIS.

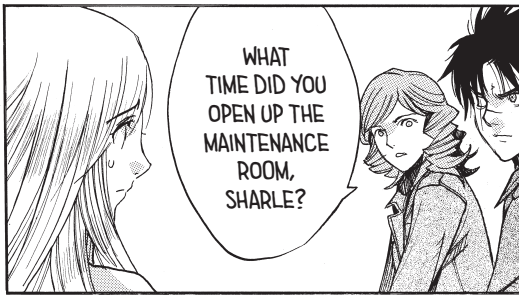
EVEN IF IT WAS A TEMPORARY MEASURE, WE DIDN'T BOTHER TO LOCK THE ROOM.

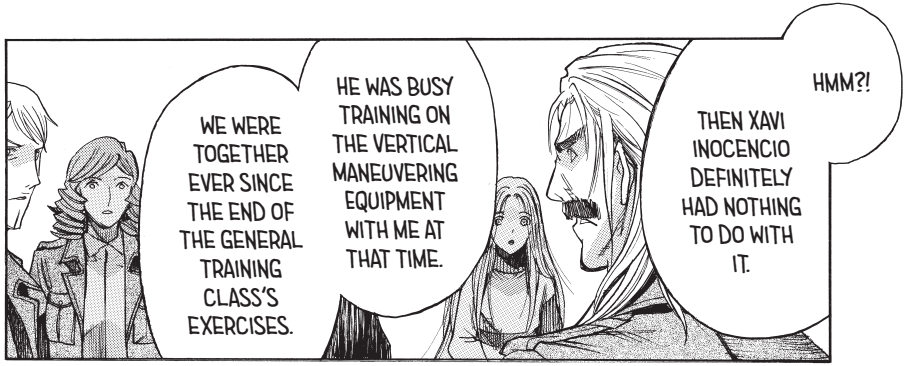
THAT'S RIGHT, MY GIRL. THE TRAINING GROUNDS ARE ONLY OPEN TO MILITARY, AND THEY ARE DISTANT FROM SHIGANSHINA.

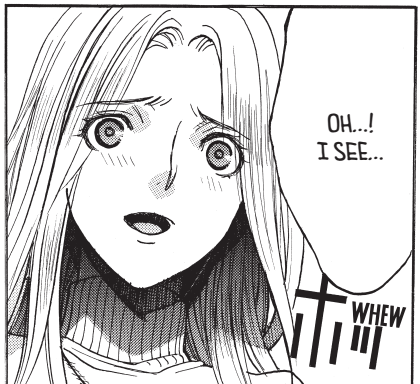
WE ALL ASSUMED THERE WAS NO CONCERN ABOUT THEFT, AND IT WAS THIS LACK OF OVERSIGHT THAT BROUGHT THE SITUATION ABOUT.


THIS DOES MEAN WE'VE NARROWED DOWN A TIME FRAME OF THE CRIME, HOWEVER.


IT WAS BEFORE DINNER...SO I THINK IT WAS JUST AFTER SIX O'CLOCK.


WHAT TIME DID YOU OPEN UP THE MAINTENANCE ROOM, SHARLE?

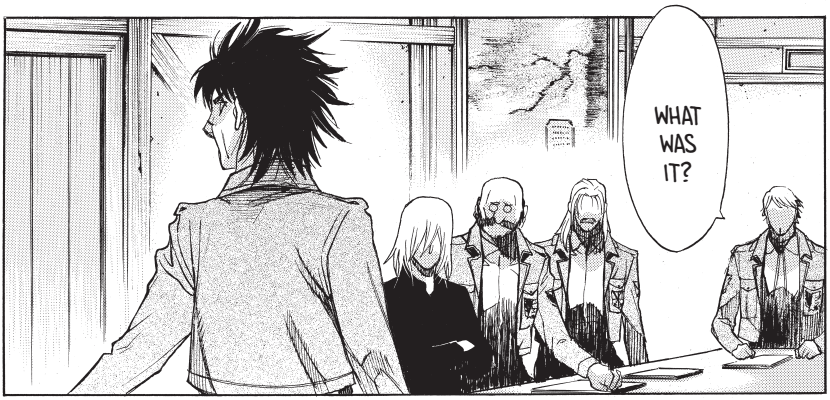

WE WERE TOGETHER EVER SINCE THE END OF THE GENERAL TRAINING CLASS'S EXERCISES.
HE WAS BUSY TRAINING ON THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT WITH ME AT THAT TIME.
HMM?! THEN XAVI INOCENCIO DEFINITELY HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT.

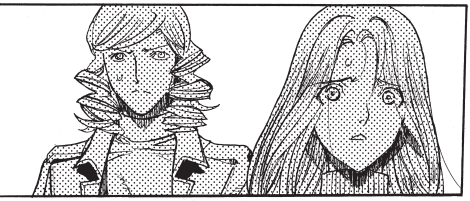

OH...! I SEE...
WHEW

IF ANYTHING, WE WERE SO ABSORBED IN THE PRACTICE THAT WE WERE LATE TO DINNER.

BAM

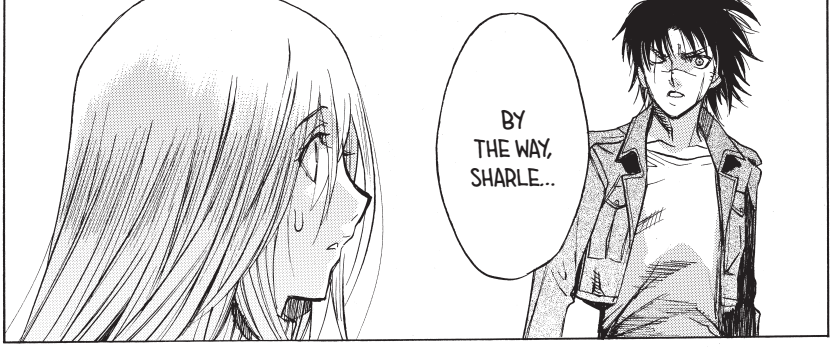
THUMP!

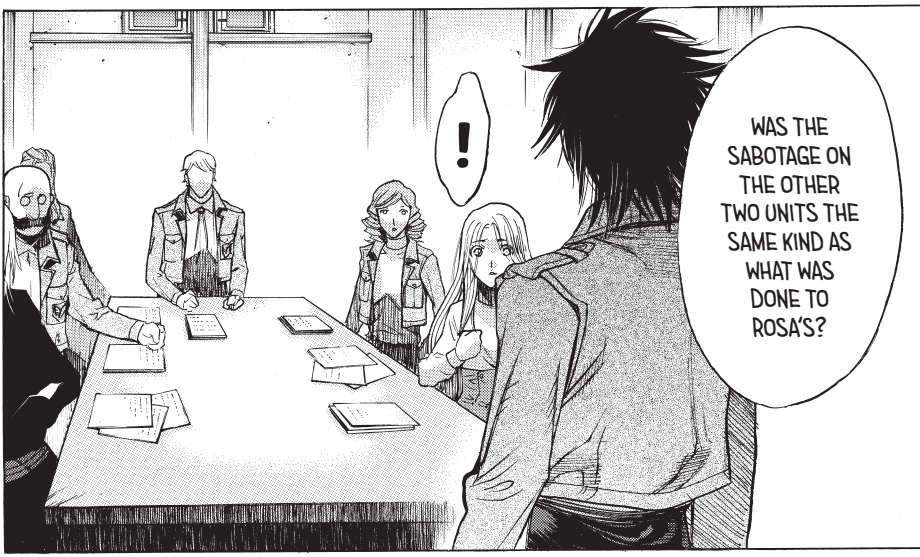

WHAT WAS IT?

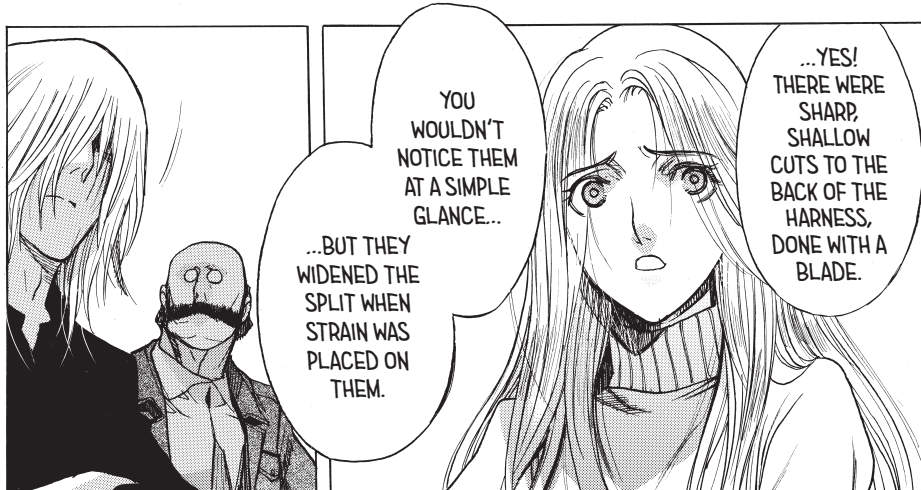


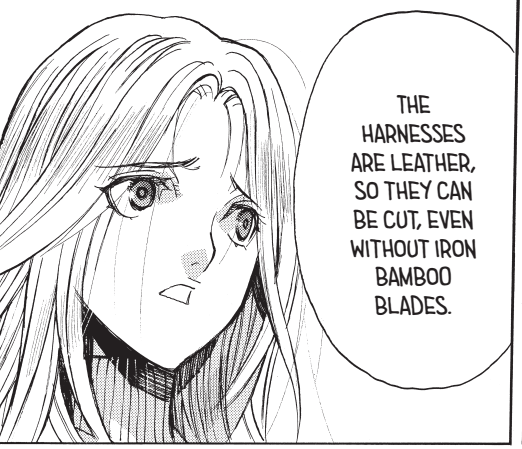
IT WAS A PRESENCE I KNOW I'VE MET BEFORE...

I DON'T KNOW...
I THOUGHT I SENSED SOMEONE OUT THERE, BUT THE HALLWAY WAS EMPTY.

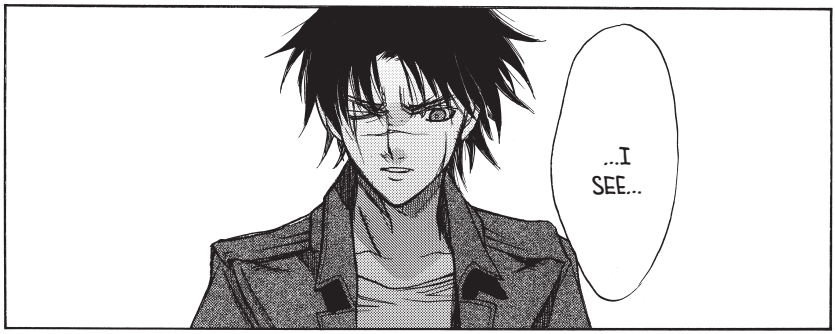

BY THE WAY, SHARLE...

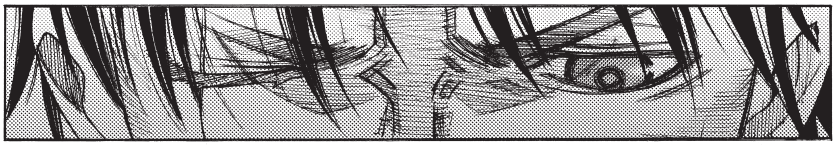

!
WAS THE SABOTAGE ON THE OTHER TWO UNITS THE SAME KIND AS WHAT WAS DONE TO ROSA'S?


YOU WOULDN'T NOTICE THEM AT A SIMPLE GLANCE...
...BUT THEY WIDENED THE SPLIT WHEN STRAIN WAS PLACED ON THEM.
...YES! THERE WERE SHARP, SHALLOW CUTS TO THE BACK OF THE HARNESS, DONE WITH A BLADE.


THE HARNESSES ARE LEATHER, SO THEY CAN BE CUT, EVEN WITHOUT IRON BAMBOO BLADES.

ARE WE TALKING ABOUT JUST AN ORDINARY KNIFE DOING THIS?
WELL...


...I SEE...

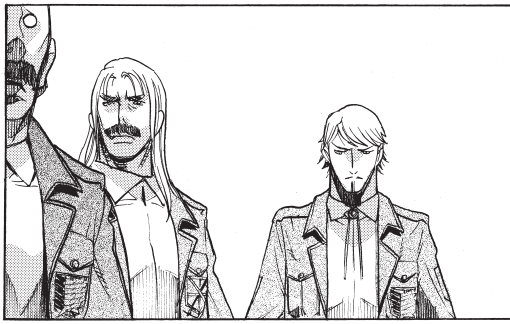


KUKLO?
DO YOU HAVE A HUNCH ABOUT THIS?

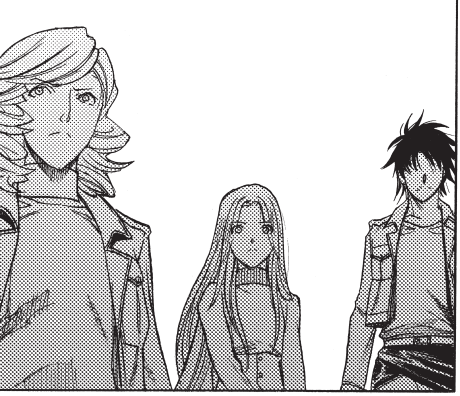
NO...IT'S ALL JUST A JUMBLE IN MY HEAD.

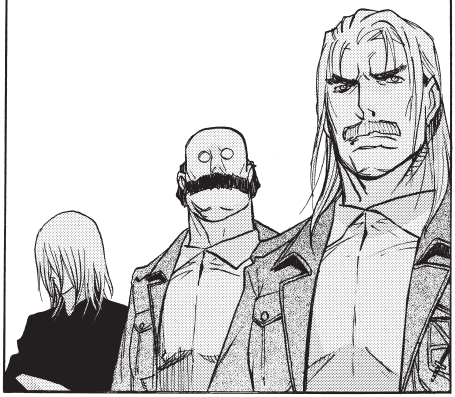
WHEN I HAVE A CLEARER PICTURE... I'LL TELL YOU.

THEN THAT'S ALL WE CAN DO WITH THE INFORMA-TION AT HAND.

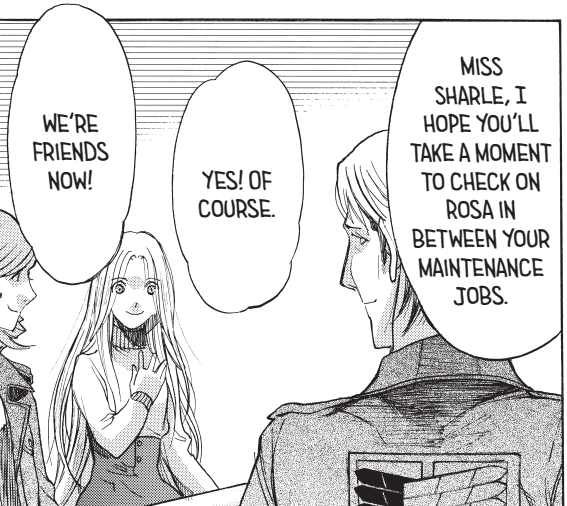


LET'S END THE DISCUSSION HERE FOR NOW, DESPITE NOT IDENTIFYING A CULPRIT.

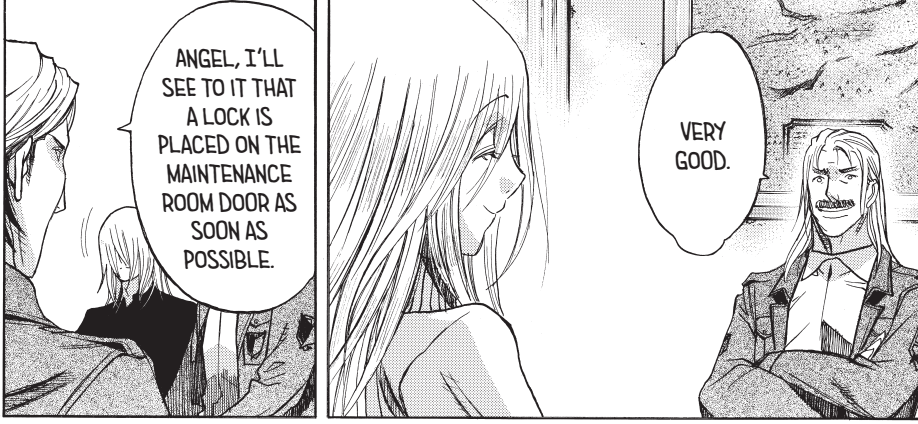


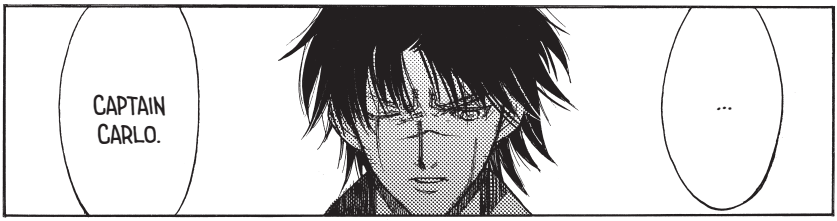


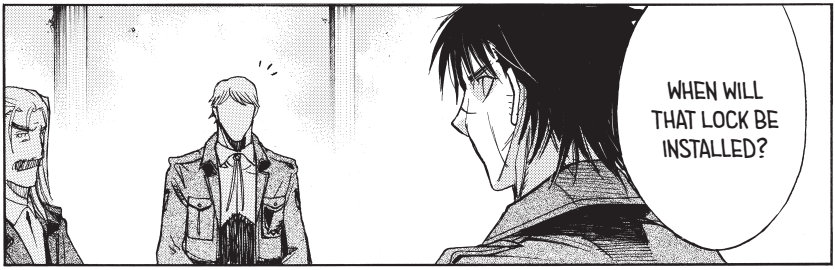
KUKLO, CARDINA, I WANT YOU TO WATCH THEM AND MAKE SURE THERE'S NO PANIC GOING AROUND.
I IMPRESSED UPON THE SPECIAL-CLASS TRAINEES THE NEED TO KEEP THIS AN INTERNAL MATTER.

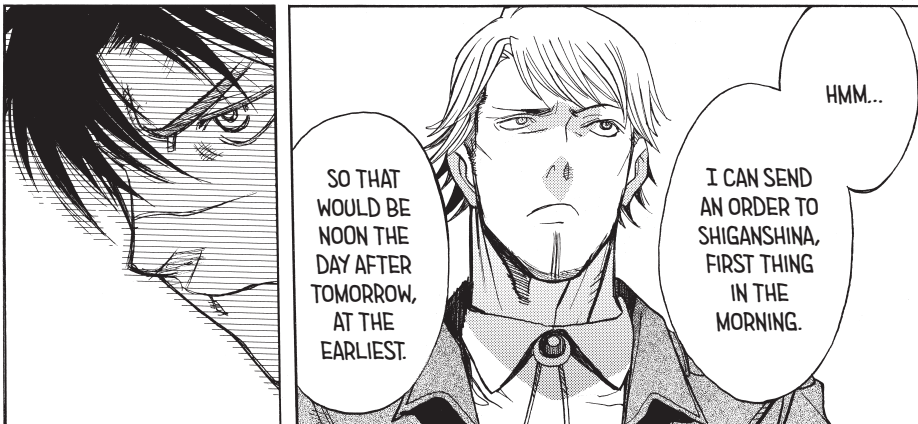

WE'RE FRIENDS NOW!
YES! OF COURSE.
MISS SHARLE, I HOPE YOU'LL TAKE A MOMENT TO CHECK ON ROSA IN BETWEEN YOUR MAINTENANCE JOBS.

YES, SIR!

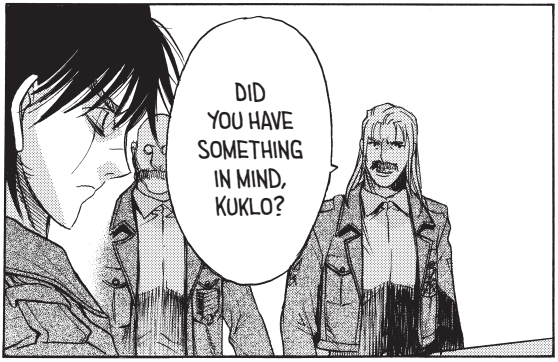

ANGEL, I'LL SEE TO IT THAT A LOCK IS PLACED ON THE MAINTENANCE ROOM DOOR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
VERY GOOD.


CAPTAIN CARLO.
...

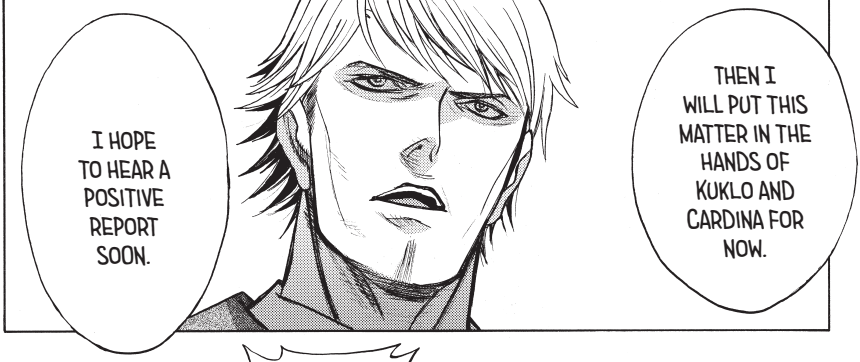

WHEN WILL THAT LOCK BE INSTALLED?

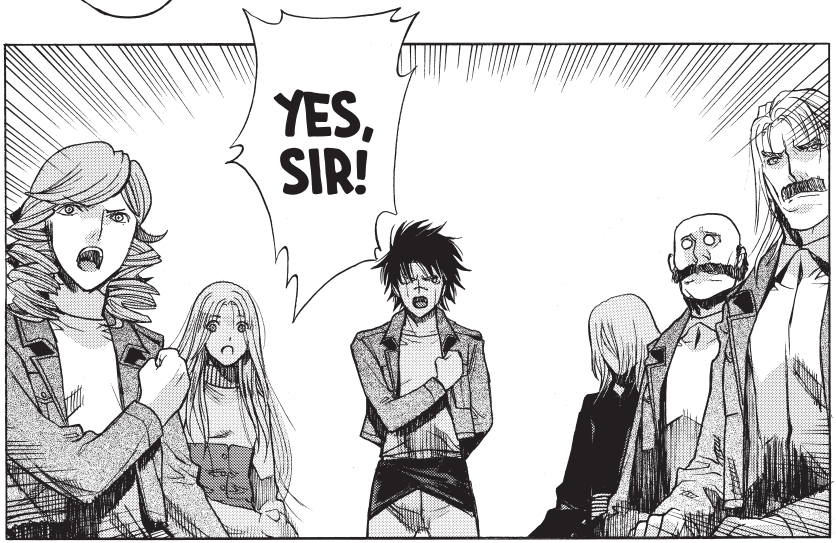

HMM...
I CAN SEND AN ORDER TO SHIGANSHINA, FIRST THING IN THE MORNING.
SO THAT WOULD BE NOON THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW, AT THE EARLIEST.

!
THEN COULD YOU MAKE THAT ANNOUNCEMENT IN THE MESS HALL AT TONIGHT'S DINNER?

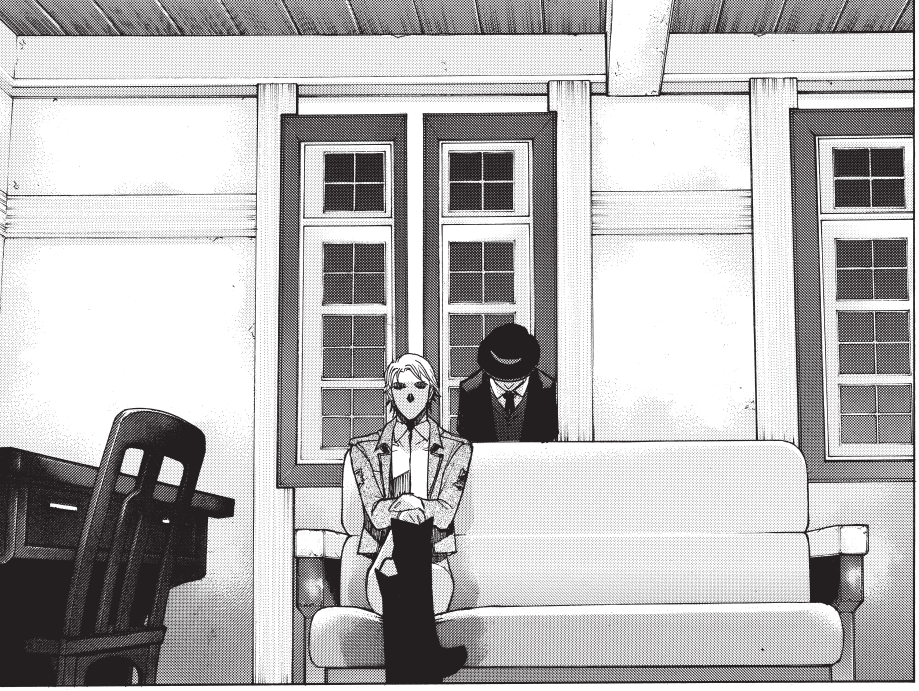

DID YOU HAVE SOMETHING IN MIND, KUKLO?

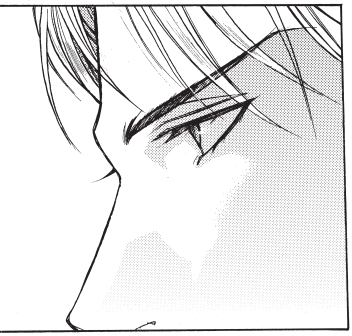
OF COURSE. NOT A PROBLEM.
VERY WELL. MAY I ASK YOU TO DO THAT, VICE CAPTAIN?

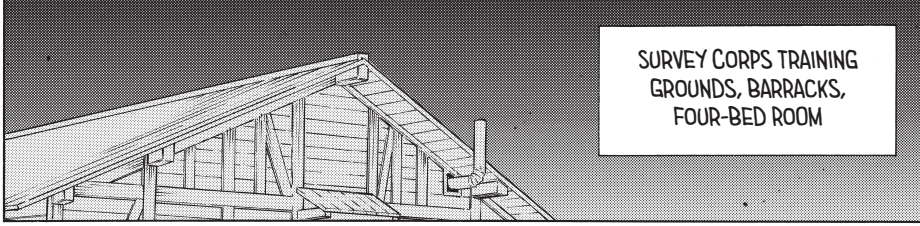


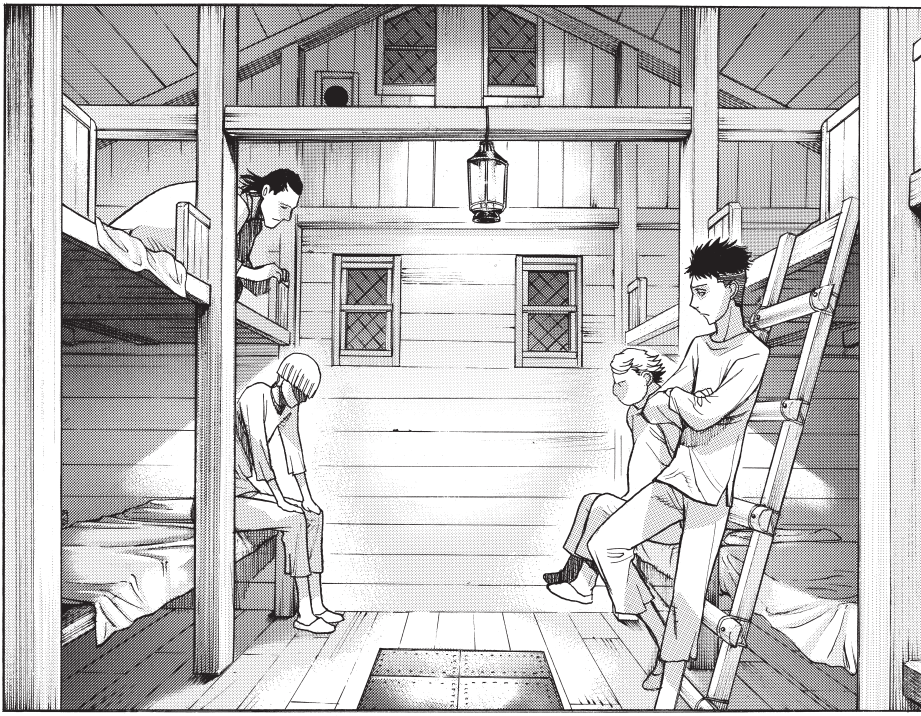


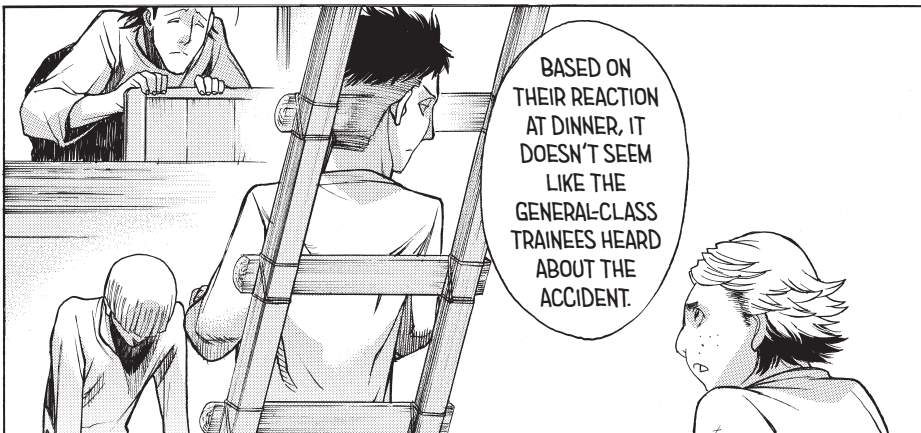
MEANWHILE, SURVEY CORPS TRAINING GROUNDS, MAIN BUILDING, GUEST ROOM



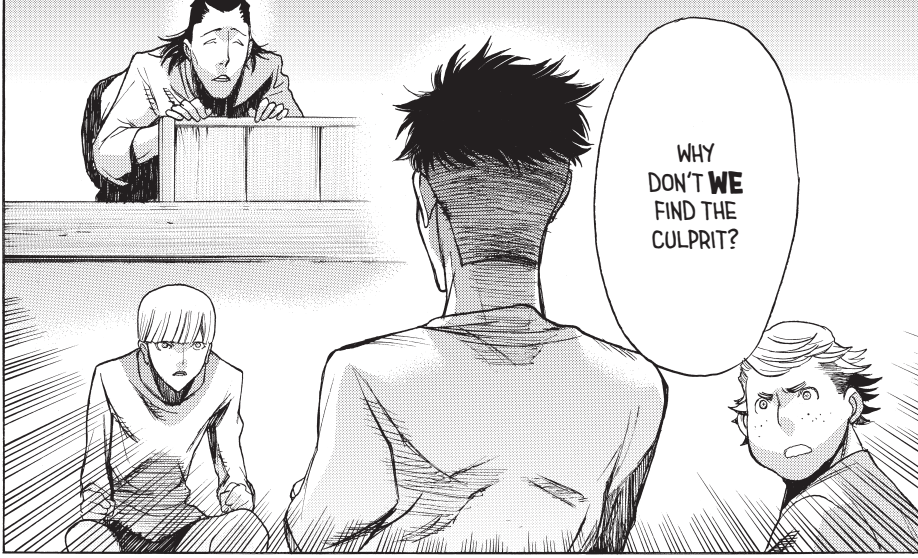


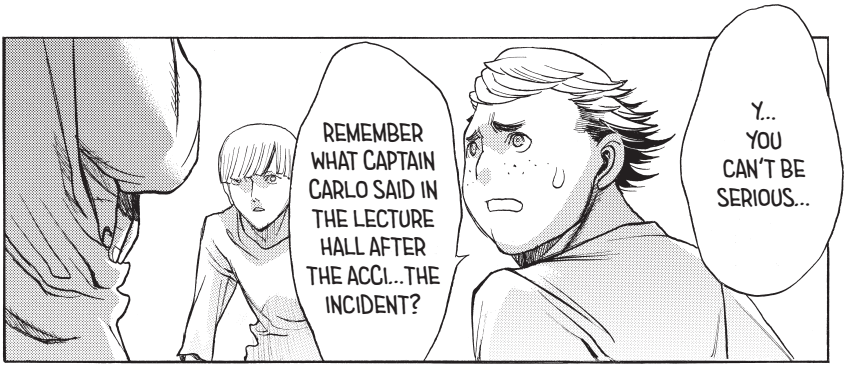

SURVEY CORPS TRAINING GROUNDS, BARRACKS, FOUR-BED ROOM



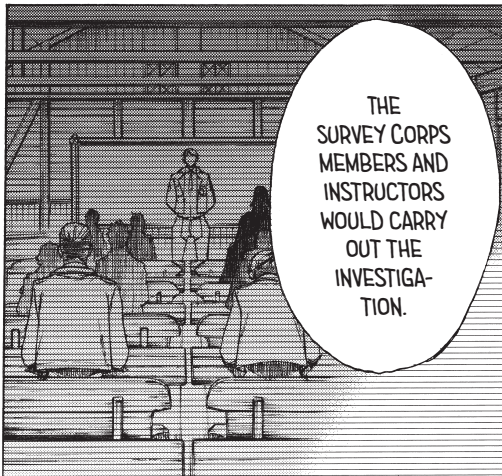

BASED ON THEIR REACTION AT DINNER, IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE THE GENERAL-CLASS TRAINEES HEARD ABOUT THE ACCIDENT.

UH... YEAH. OF COURSE.
IT WASN'T AN ACCIDENT!
WHAM
WHO DID THAT TO HER?!
DAMMIT...
GUYS.
...
HEY, FELIX...


WHY DON'T **WE** FIND THE CULPRIT?


Y... YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS...
REMEMBER WHAT CAPTAIN CARLO SAID IN THE LECTURE HALL AFTER THE ACCI...THE INCIDENT?

WHAT, SO YOU'D RATHER JUST SIT AROUND AND DO NOTHING?!
AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO ROSA...
...!

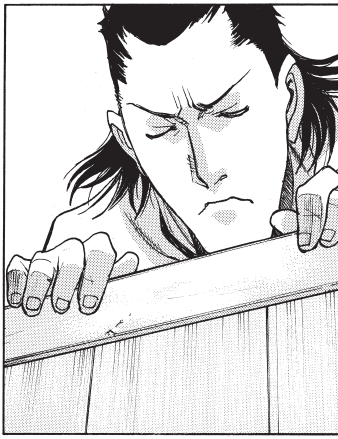

THE SURVEY CORPS MEMBERS AND INSTRUCTORS WOULD CARRY OUT THE INVESTIGA-TION.

UH... SPEAKING OF WHICH, HOW IS ROSA?
IS SHE ALL RIGHT?
YEAH.
I GOT THE STORY FROM SHARLE BEFORE DINNER.
THE DOCTOR AGREED THAT HER INJURIES WEREN'T TOO BAD. BUT SHE'S RESTING IN HER ROOM AS A PRECAUTION.
AND SHARLE IS HER ROOMMATE, AND SHE'S WATCHING HER CLOSELY, SO IT'S ALL RIGHT
WHEW
BUT...
CLENCH...
...SHE COULD HAVE DIED...
I CAN'T LET THAT STAND.

YIKES!
WHOEVER DID IT MUST PAY.

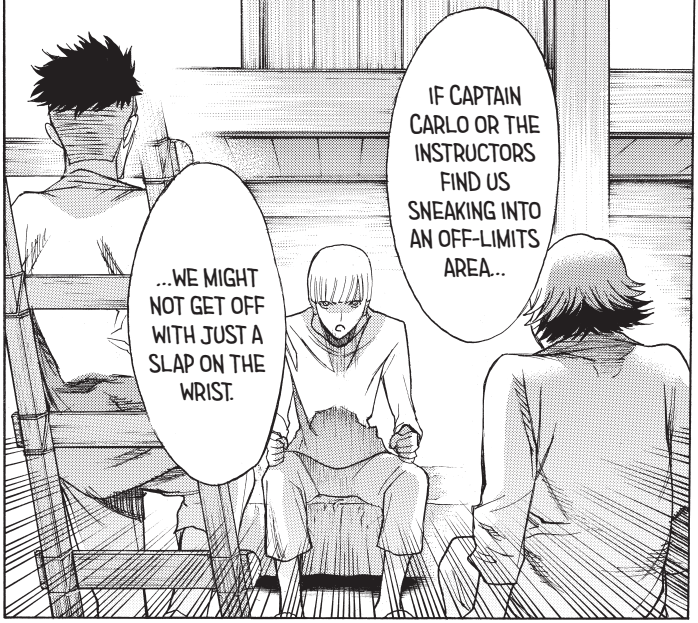
I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT, THOUGH.

DON'T SPEAK UP WHEN WE'RE NOT EXPECTING IT...

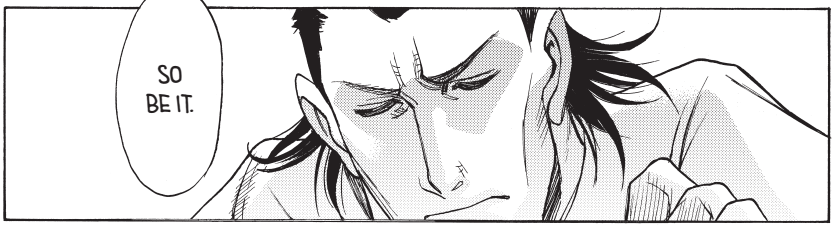


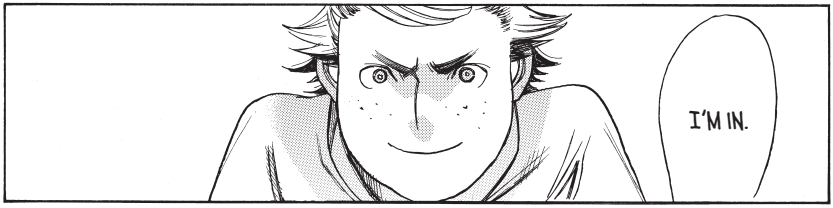
IF YOU THINK ABOUT, CAPTAIN SAID THAT THEY WERE GOING TO INVESTIGATE, BUT HE DIDN'T SAY THAT WE WERE FORBIDDEN FROM DOING IT TOO.

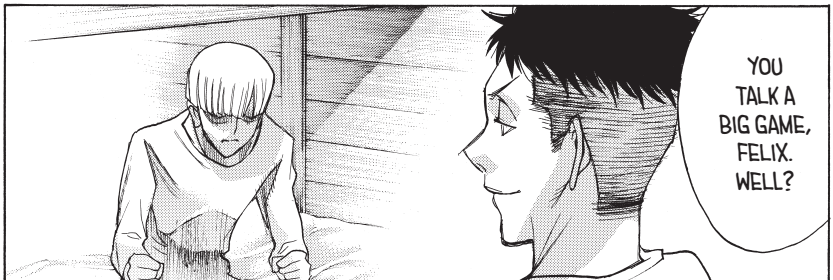
BY THE WAY...
DURING DINNER, THE VICE CAPTAIN SAID...
...THAT THE MAINTENANCE ROOM DOOR WOULD GET A LOCK ATTACHED AT MIDDAY THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW, SO FOR SECURITY REASONS, THAT WHOLE AREA WOULD BE OFF-LIMITS UNTIL THEN.
SO IF THEY'RE GOING TO SABOTAGE THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT AGAIN...
...IT'D HAVE TO BE DURING THE POST-EXERCISE MAINTENANCE TOMORROW.
AFTER ALL, THE ARMORY IS COMPLETELY LOCKED UP.
SO **WE'LL** GUARD THE MAINTENANCE ROOM OURSELVES!


IF CAPTAIN CARLO OR THE INSTRUCTORS FIND US SNEAKING INTO AN OFF-LIMITS AREA...
...WE MIGHT NOT GET OFF WITH JUST A SLAP ON THE WRIST.

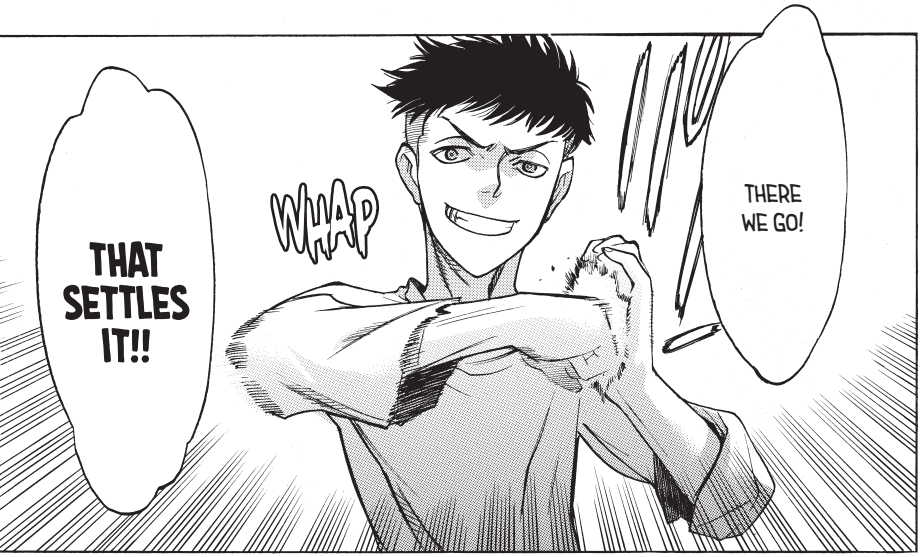
HOW-EVER...

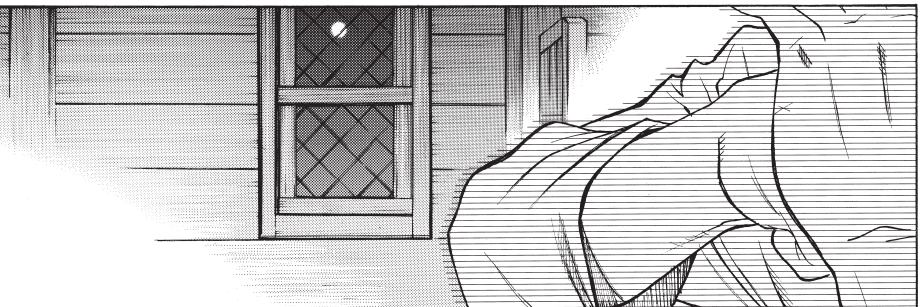

SO BE IT.

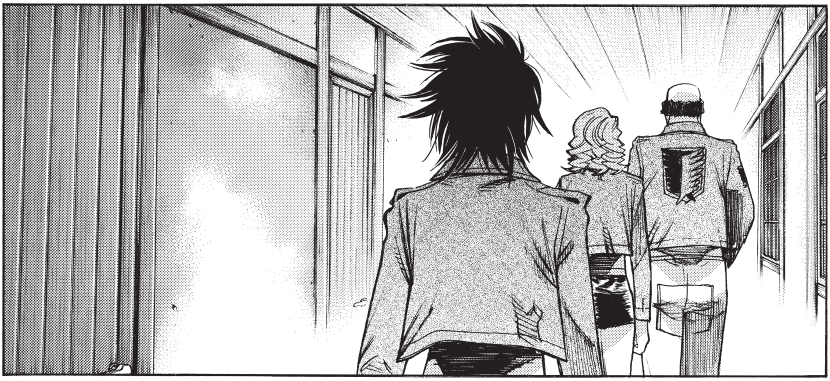

I'M IN.

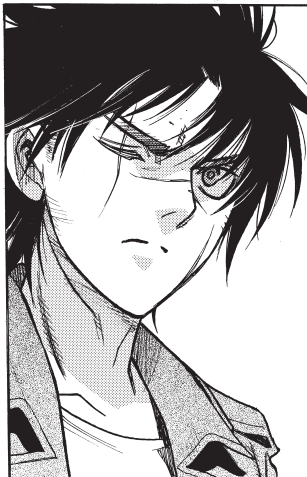

YOU TALK A BIG GAME, FELIX. WELL?

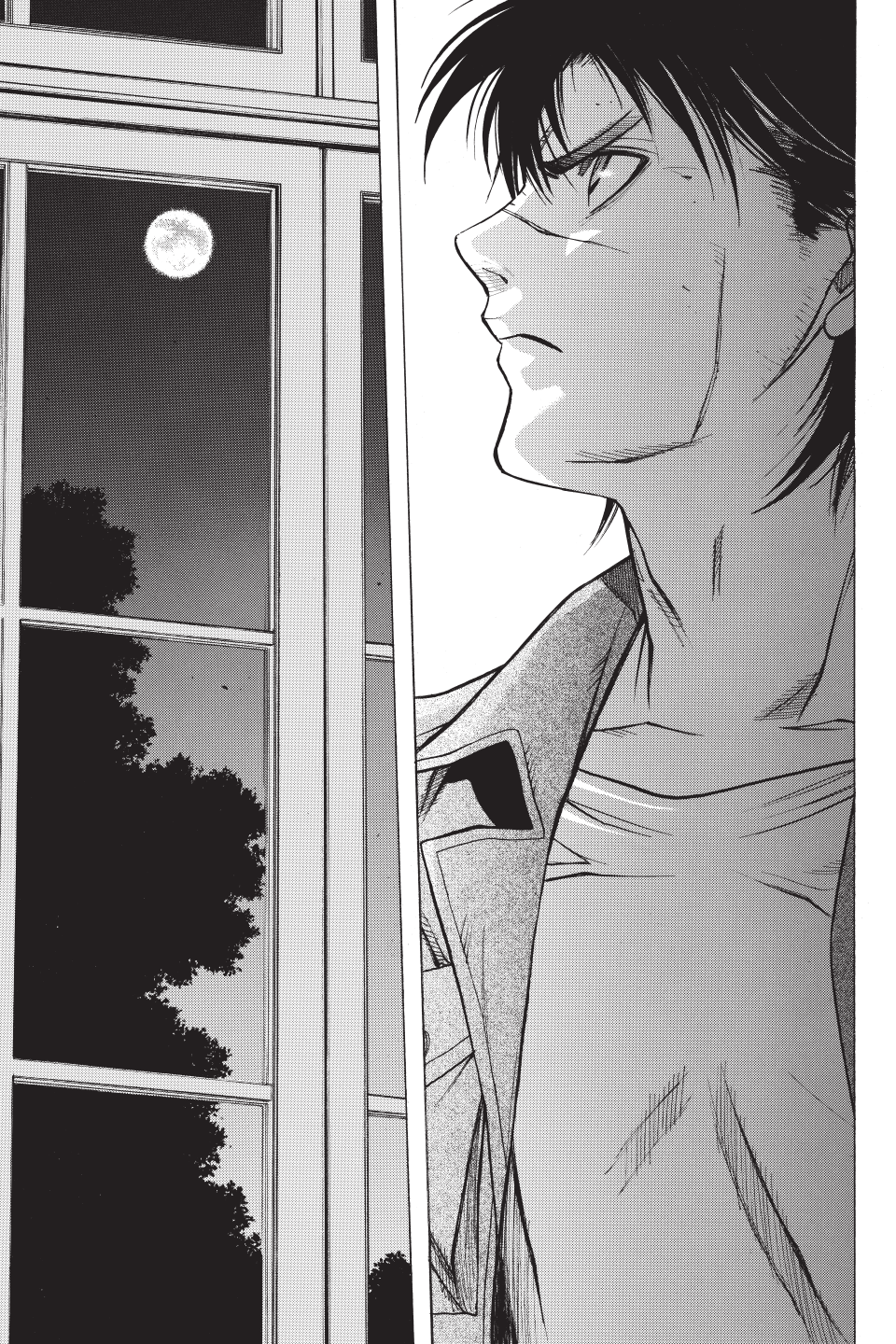
YOU SHOULDN'T EVEN NEED TO ASK.
I'LL CATCH THE GUY WHO DID IT MYSELF AND FORCE HIM TO PAY FOR HIS CRIME.


THERE WE GO!
WHAP
THAT SETTLES IT!!





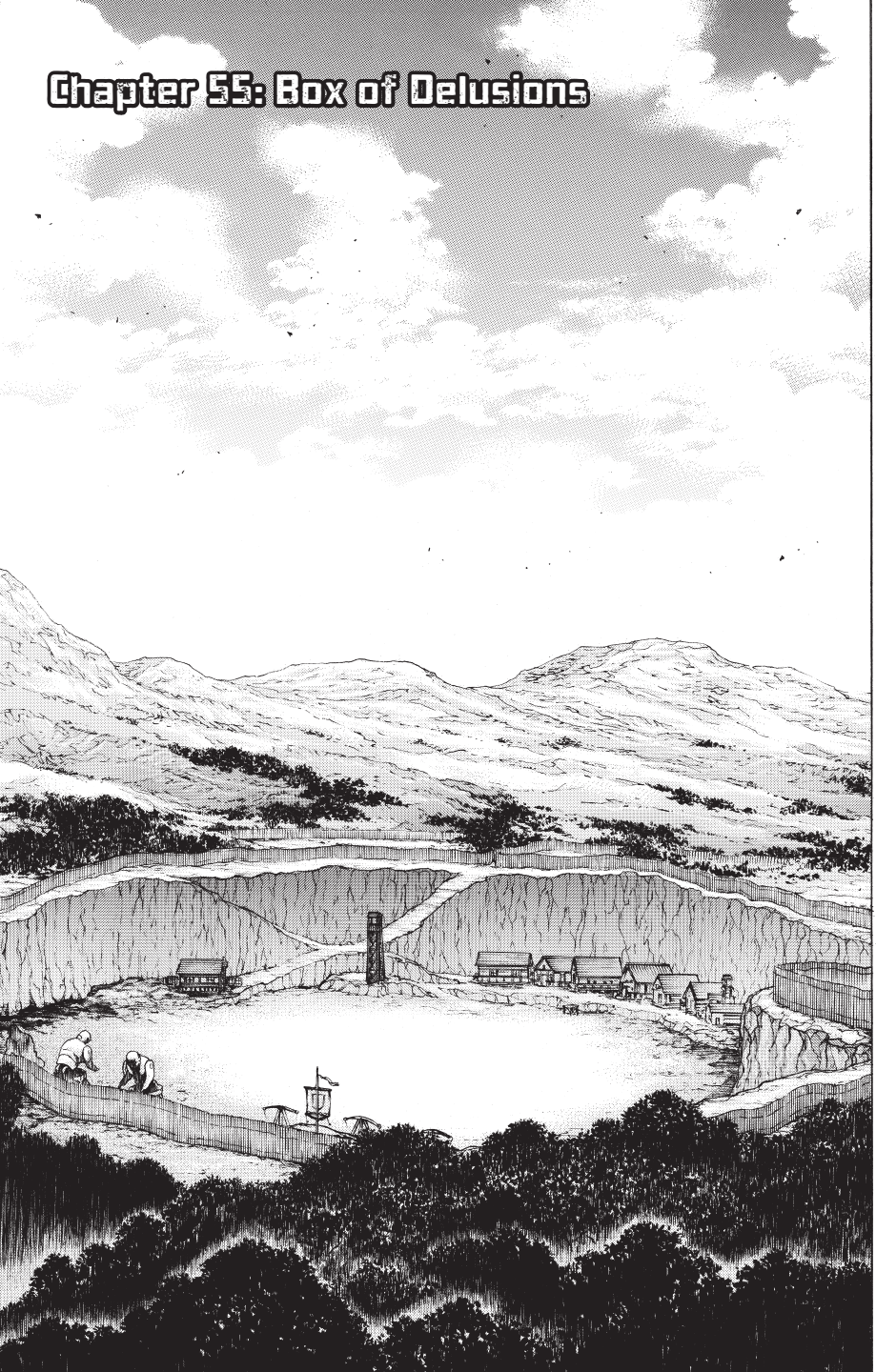




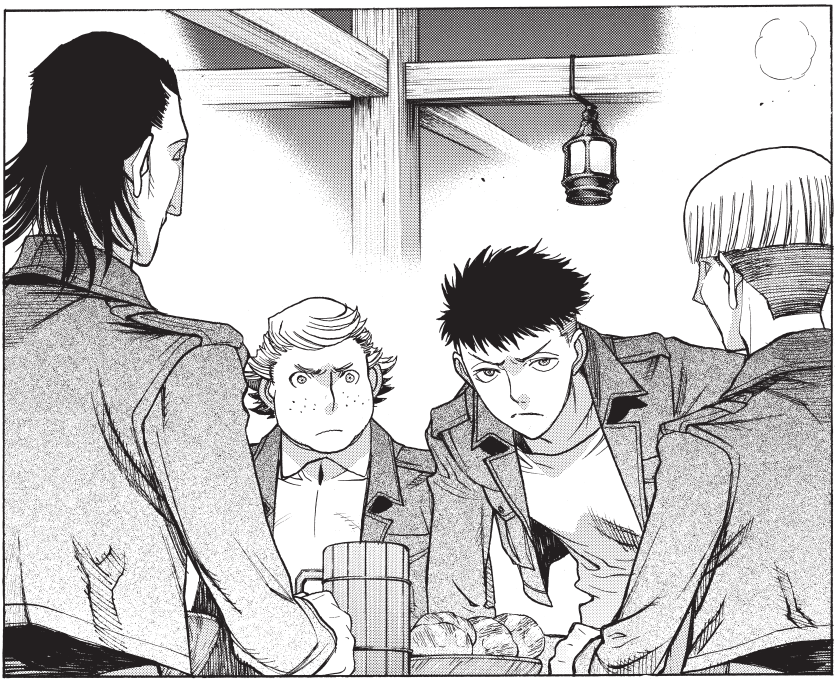
Chapter 54: In the Thick of Paranoia · End

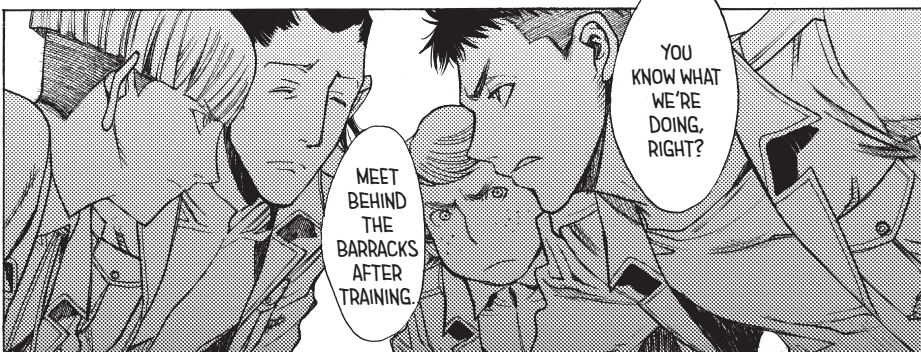
ATTACK ON TITAN
BEFORE THE FALL

Chapter 55: Box of Delusions

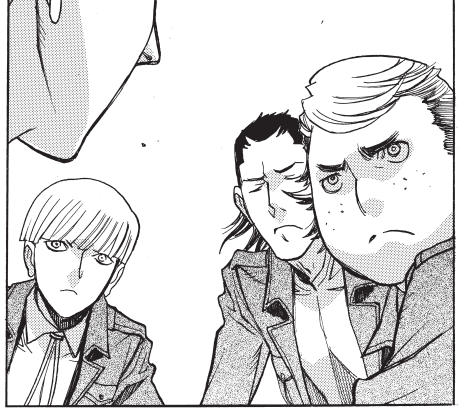


HEY, LISTEN UP.




YOU KNOW WHAT WE'RE DOING, RIGHT?
MEET BEHIND THE BARRACKS AFTER TRAINING.

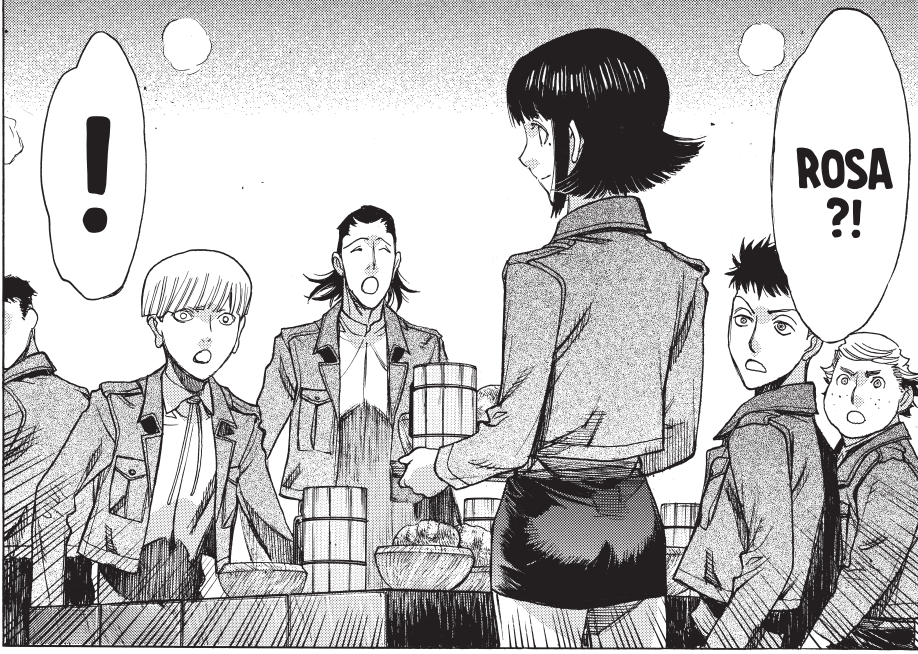
...YEAH, WE KNOW. WE WERE UP ALL NIGHT PLANNING IT.



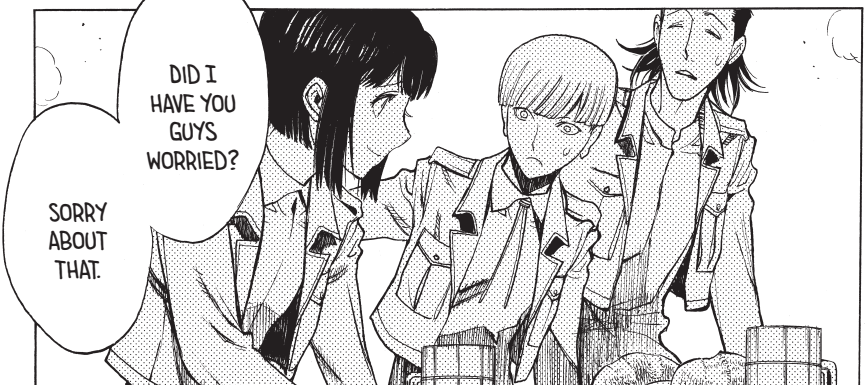
MURMUR
MURMUR MURMUR
!
WHAT IF SOMEONE OVERHEARD ?!
AND DON'T BRING THAT UP HERE!

WHAT'S THIS? WHAT HAPPENED?!

GUESS I'M JUST A LITTLE AMPED UP ABOUT IT...
S-SORRY...


!
ROSA ?!

I'M JUST FINE.
YEAH!
Y-YOU'RE ALL BETTER NOW?


DID I HAVE YOU GUYS WORRIED?
SORRY ABOUT THAT.

I'LL BE TAKING PART IN THE TRAINING JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE TODAY!

I'VE GOT THE DOCTOR'S STAMP OF APPROVAL.

TRAINING ...?

ARE YOU...SURE ABOUT THAT...?

I MEAN...

FELIX!

ER... RIGHT.

YOU'RE ASKING ABOUT THE SABOTAGE ?

ドキ

B-BMP

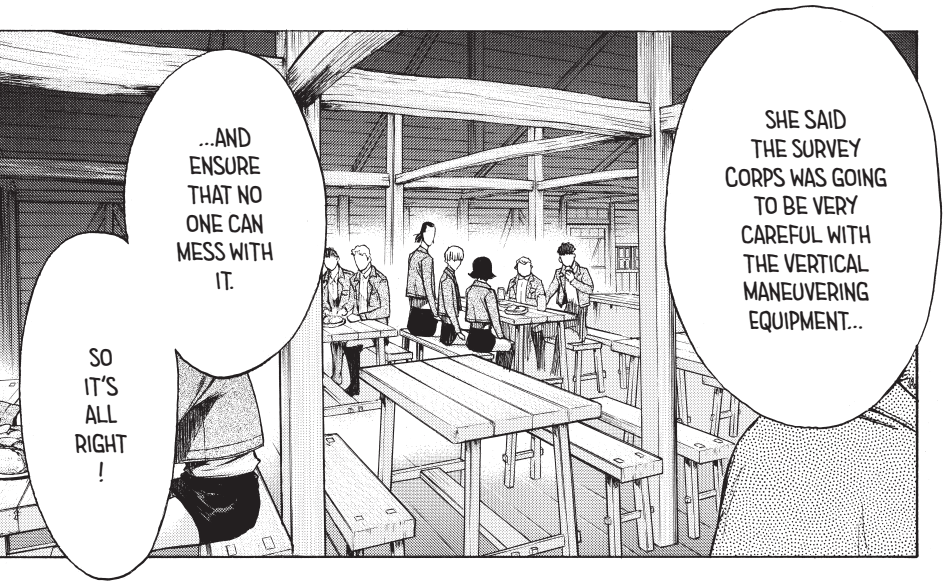
BLUSH

...YEAH...

AH...

UM...

!
I ASKED SHARLE ABOUT THAT LAST NIGHT.
I-LISTEN...


...AND ENSURE THAT NO ONE CAN MESS WITH IT.
SO IT'S ALL RIGHT !
SHE SAID THE SURVEY CORPS WAS GOING TO BE VERY CAREFUL WITH THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT...

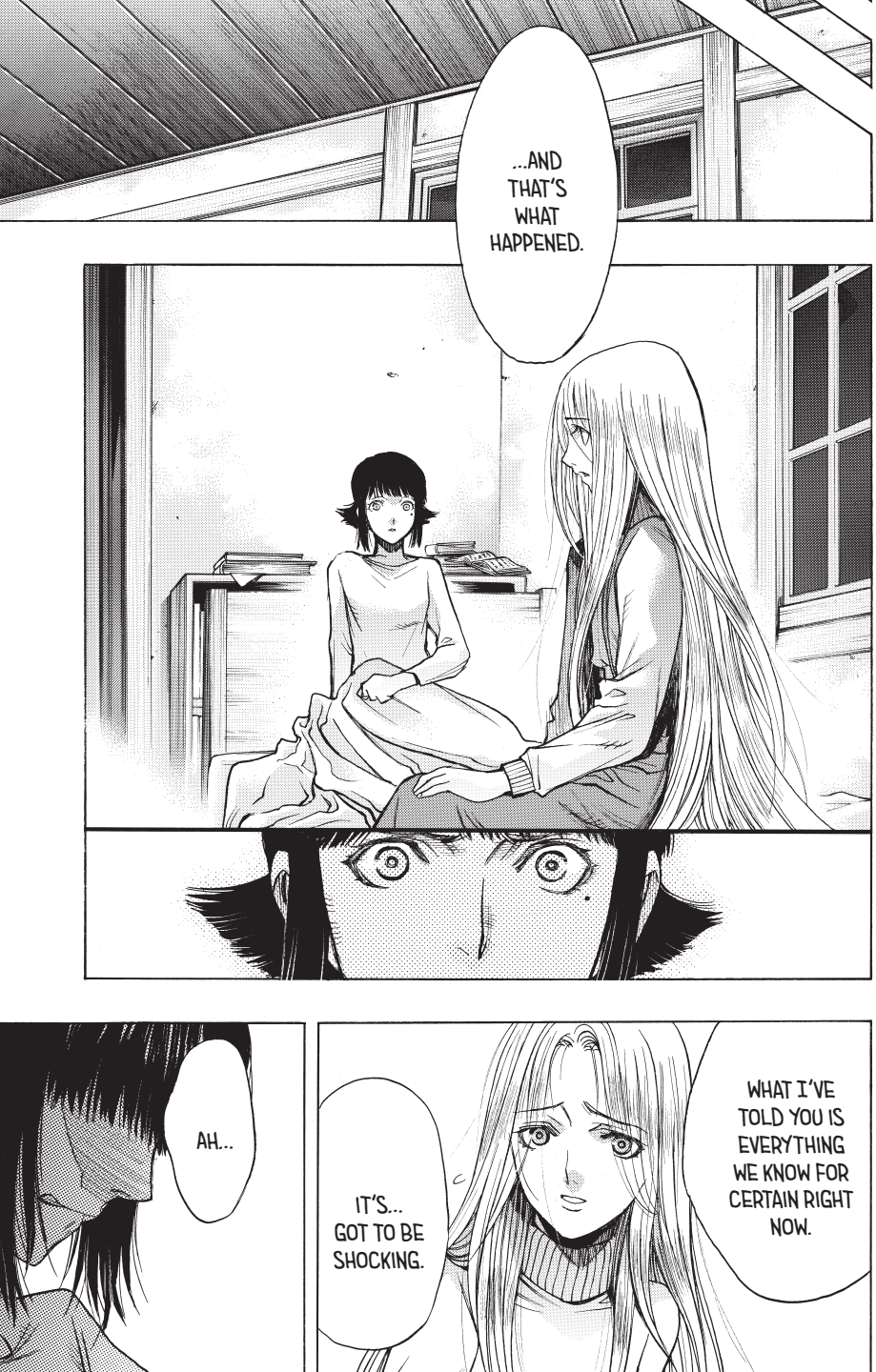
WELL, THAT'S GOOD.
BUT...

I TRUST IN SHARLE'S MAINTE-NANCE!

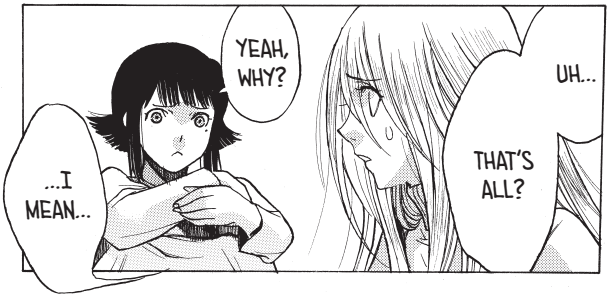
YEAH, SO DID I!
I JUST ASSUMED THAT SHARLE WASN'T GOING TO TELL YOU, IN ORDER TO KEEP YOU FROM BEING WORRIED.

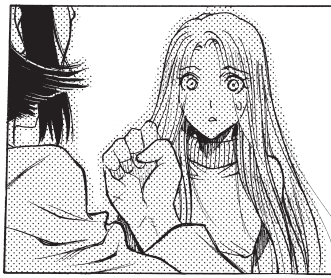
OH! ME TOO!

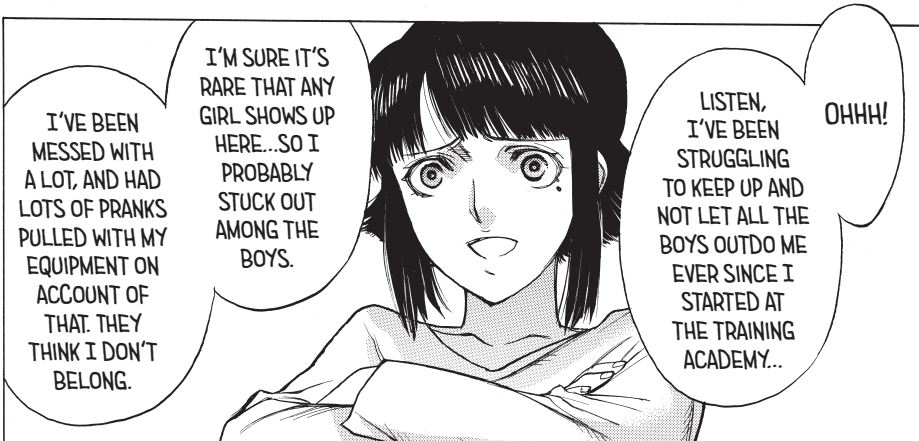
WELL...
SHE SAID SHE WASN'T GOING TO TELL ME AT FIRST, EITHER...

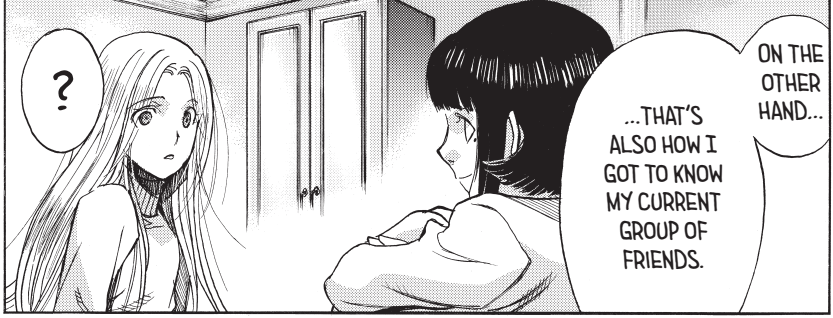

...AND THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED.
AH...
IT'S... GOT TO BE SHOCKING.
WHAT I'VE TOLD YOU IS EVERYTHING WE KNOW FOR CERTAIN RIGHT NOW.

ARRRGH, THAT PISSES ME OFF !!!
I COULD'VE EASILY DIED!
WHO-EVER DID THAT, I'D LIKE TO SOCK 'EM IN THE FACE!

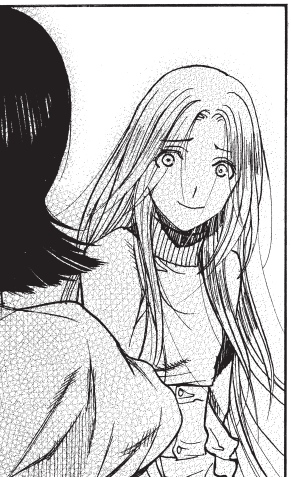

UH...
THAT'S ALL?
YEAH, WHY?
...I MEAN...




OHHH!
LISTEN, I'VE BEEN STRUGGLING TO KEEP UP AND NOT LET ALL THE BOYS OUTDO ME EVER SINCE I STARTED AT THE TRAINING ACADEMY...
I'M SURE IT'S RARE THAT ANY GIRL SHOWS UP HERE...SO I PROBABLY STUCK OUT AMONG THE BOYS.
I'VE BEEN MESSED WITH A LOT, AND HAD LOTS OF PRANKS PULLED WITH MY EQUIPMENT ON ACCOUNT OF THAT. THEY THINK I DON'T BELONG.

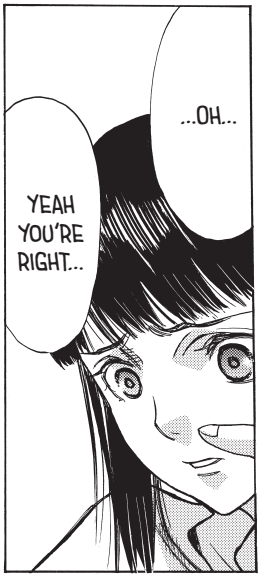

?
...THAT'S ALSO HOW I GOT TO KNOW MY CURRENT GROUP OF FRIENDS.
ON THE OTHER HAND...

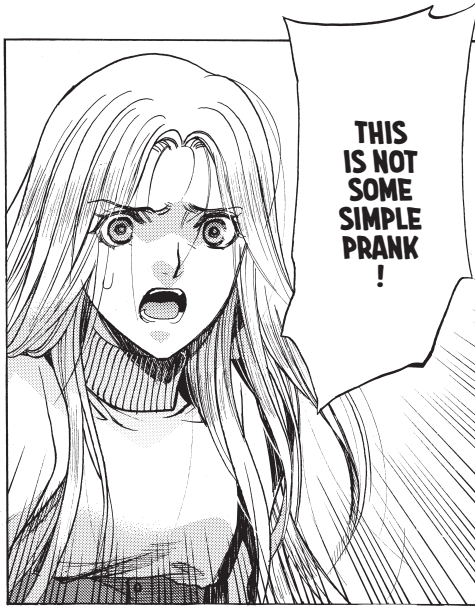
THEY WERE LIKE, "KNOCK OFF ALL THE BULLCRAP!"

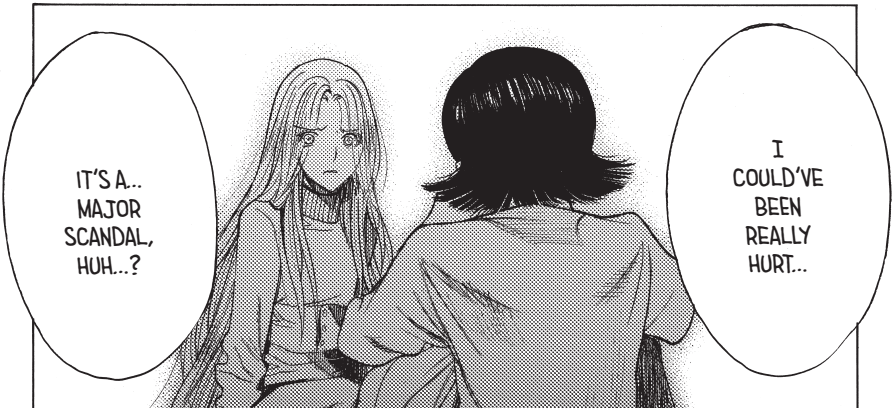


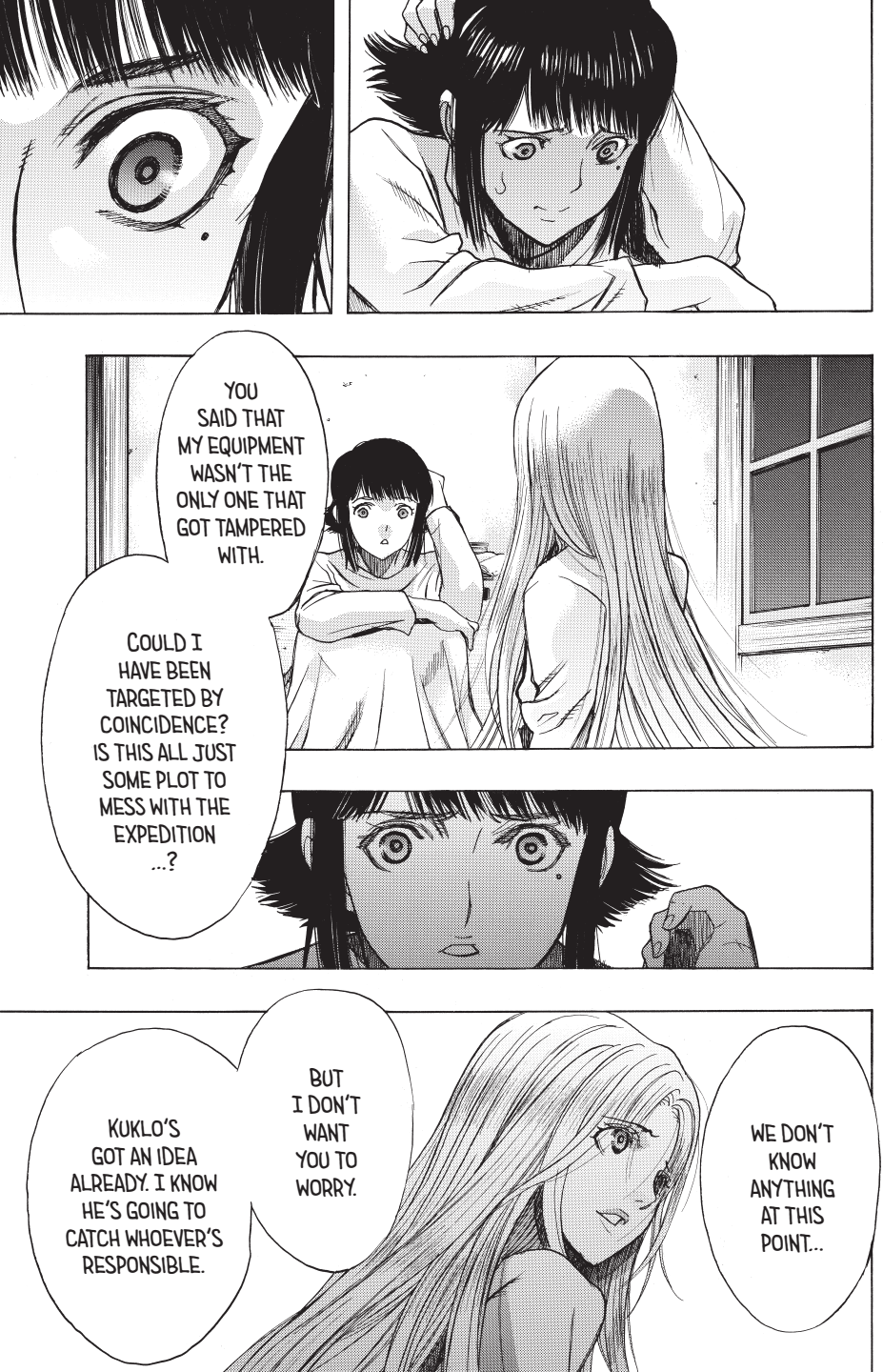
...I THINK THAT'S WHEN I STARTED TO GET CLOSER TO THOSE FOUR.

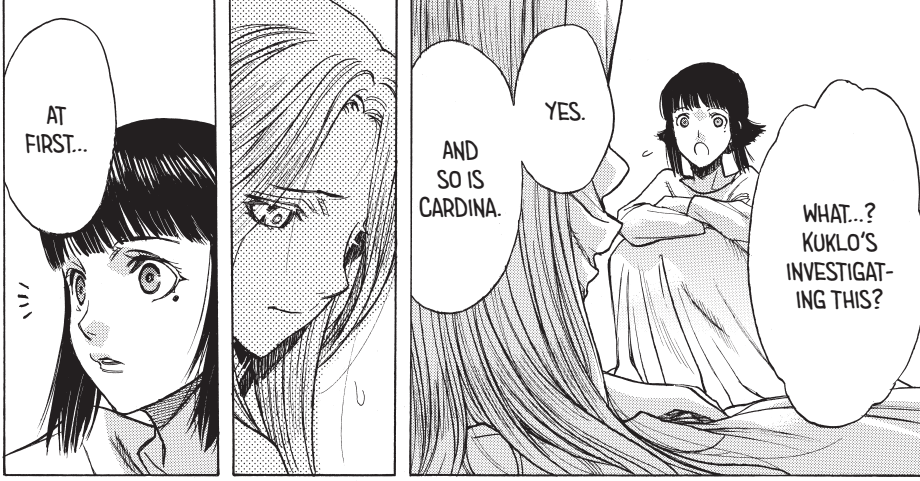
NO !!
I GUESS THE POINT IS...I'M KINDA USED TO THIS SORT OF NASTINESS?

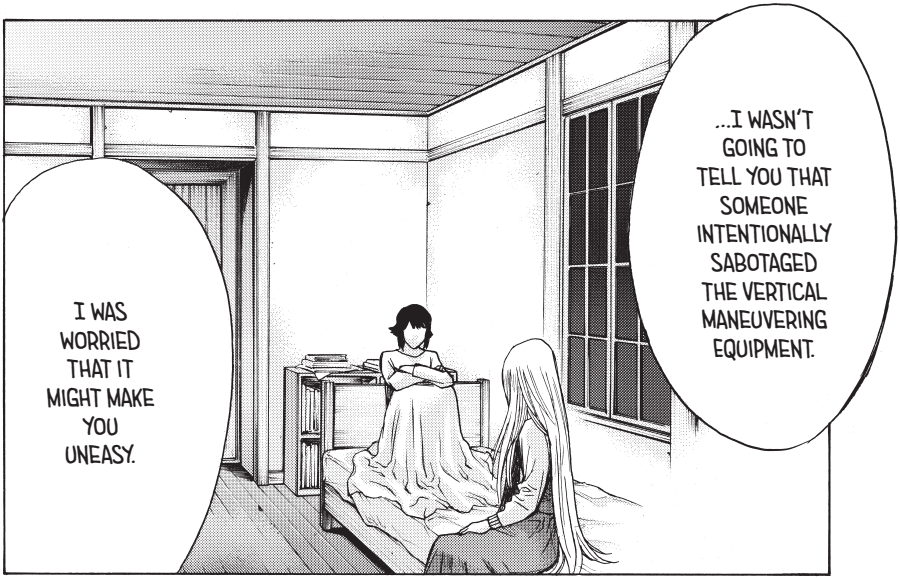

...OH...
YEAH YOU'RE RIGHT...

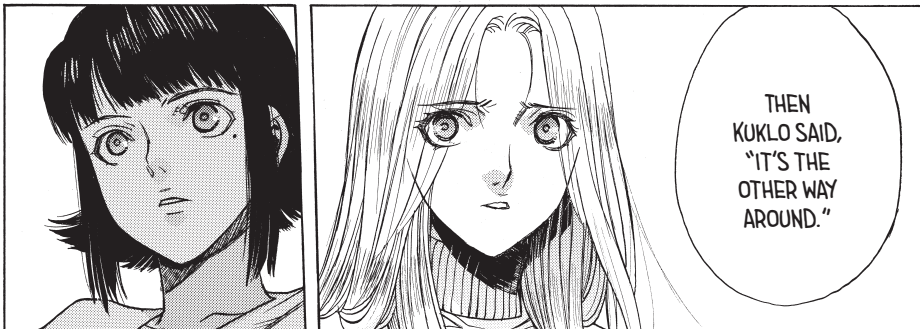

THIS IS NOT SOME SIMPLE PRANK !

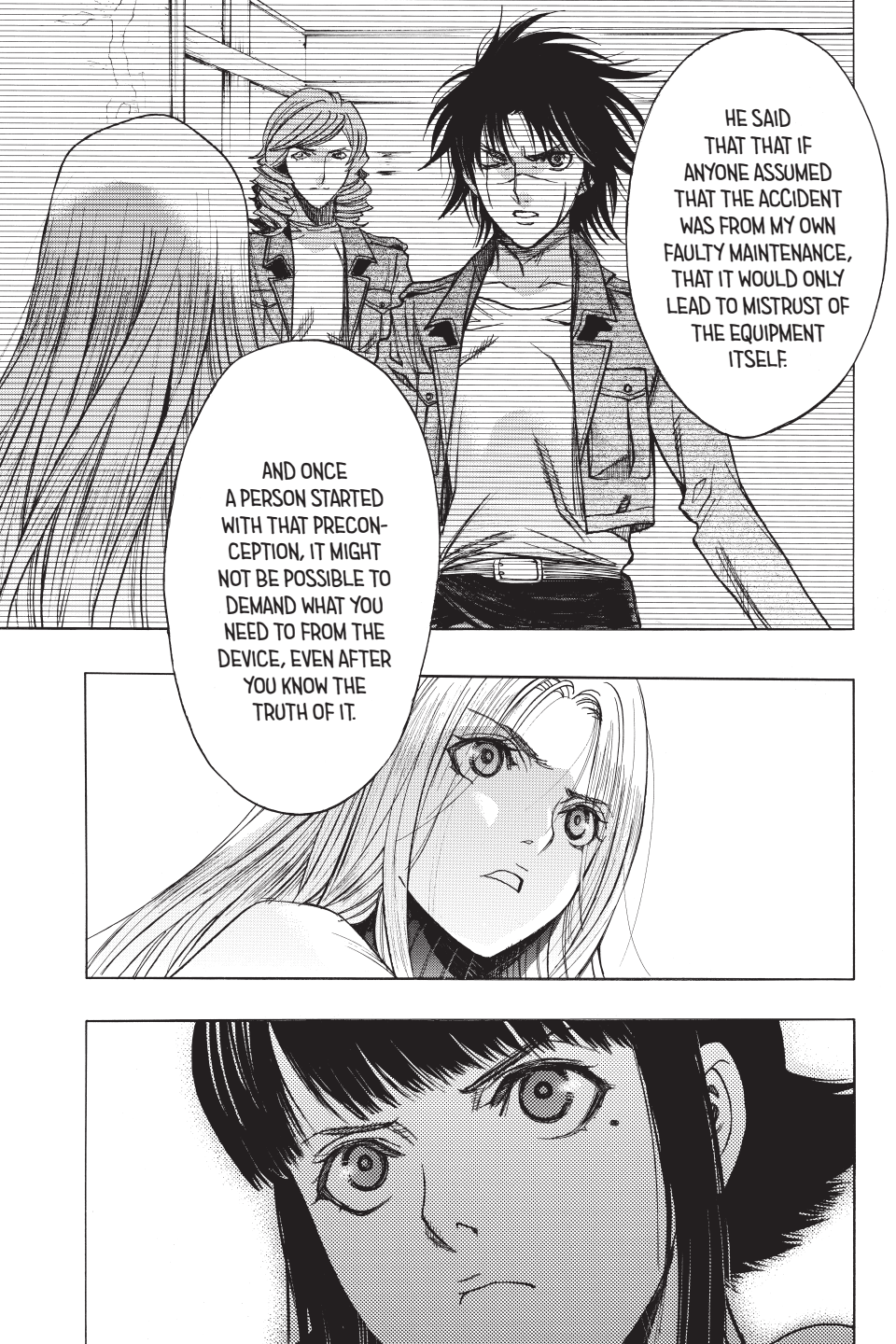

IT'S A... MAJOR SCANDAL, HUH...?
I COULD'VE BEEN REALLY HURT...

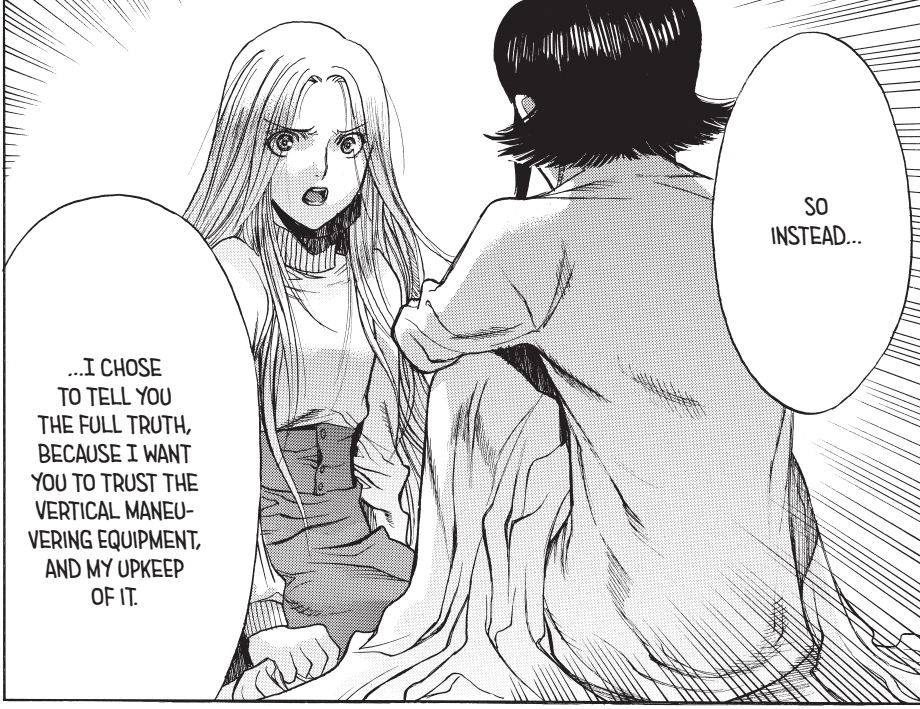

YOU SAID THAT MY EQUIPMENT WASN'T THE ONLY ONE THAT GOT TAMPERED WITH.
COULD I HAVE BEEN TARGETED BY COINCIDENCE? IS THIS ALL JUST SOME PLOT TO MESS WITH THE EXPEDITION ...?
WE DON'T KNOW ANYTHING AT THIS POINT...
BUT I DON'T WANT YOU TO WORRY.
KUKLO'S GOT AN IDEA ALREADY. I KNOW HE'S GOING TO CATCH WHOEVER'S RESPONSIBLE.

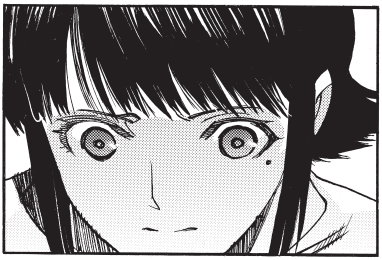

AT FIRST...
YES.
AND SO IS CARDINA.
WHAT...? KUKLO'S INVESTIGATING THIS?

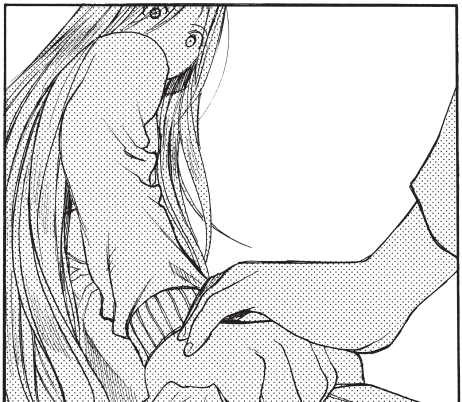

I WAS WORRIED THAT IT MIGHT MAKE YOU UNEASY.
...I WASN'T GOING TO TELL YOU THAT SOMEONE INTENTIONALLY SABOTAGED THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT.

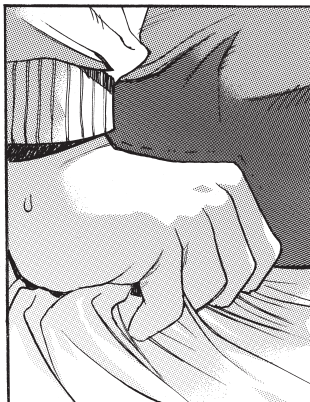

THEN KUKLO SAID, "IT'S THE OTHER WAY AROUND."


HE SAID THAT THAT IF ANYONE ASSUMED THAT THE ACCIDENT WAS FROM MY OWN FAULTY MAINTENANCE, THAT IT WOULD ONLY LEAD TO MISTRUST OF THE EQUIPMENT ITSELF.
AND ONCE A PERSON STARTED WITH THAT PRECONCEPTION, IT MIGHT NOT BE POSSIBLE TO DEMAND WHAT YOU NEED TO FROM THE DEVICE, EVEN AFTER YOU KNOW THE TRUTH OF IT.


SO INSTEAD...
...I CHOSE TO TELL YOU THE FULL TRUTH, BECAUSE I WANT YOU TO TRUST THE VERTICAL MANEU-VERING EQUIPMENT, AND MY UPKEEP OF IT.







IT'S OKAY! I HAVE FULL TRUST!

IN THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT... AND IN **YOU!!**

TH-THANK YOU!

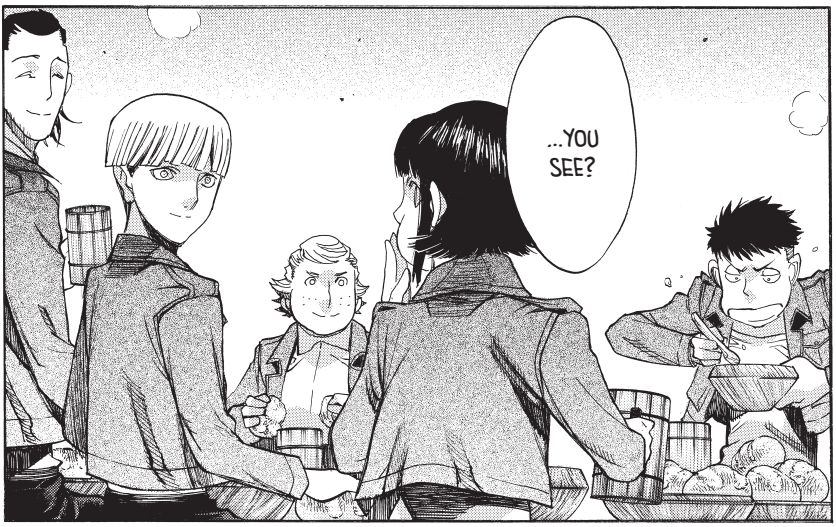
I WON'T LET ANYONE MESS WITH THE EQUIPMENT AGAIN!

AND IT'S NOT JUST ME. ANGEL WILL HELP...

...AND SO WILL CAPTAIN CARLO, AND THE ENTIRE SURVEY CORPS!

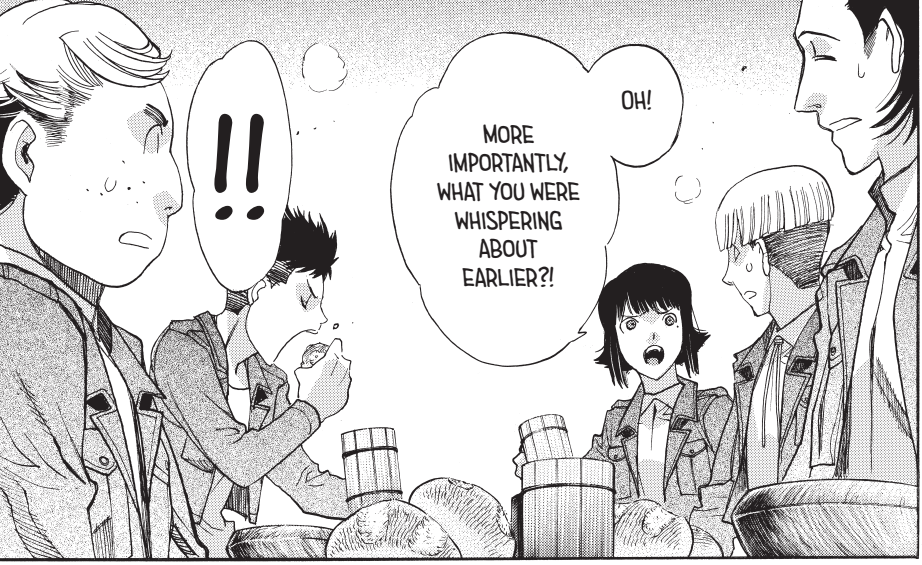
BUT OF COURSE ...

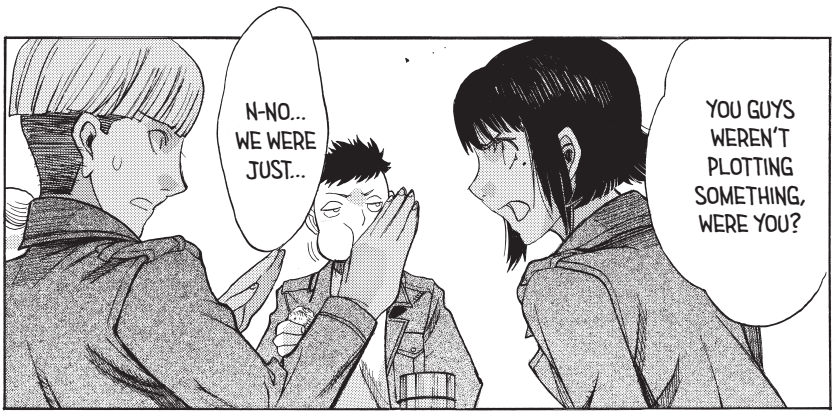
HA HA HA HA...
...KUKLO AND CARDINA MIGHT SOLVE THE CASE BEFORE ANY OF THAT BECOMES NECESSARY.


...YOU SEE?

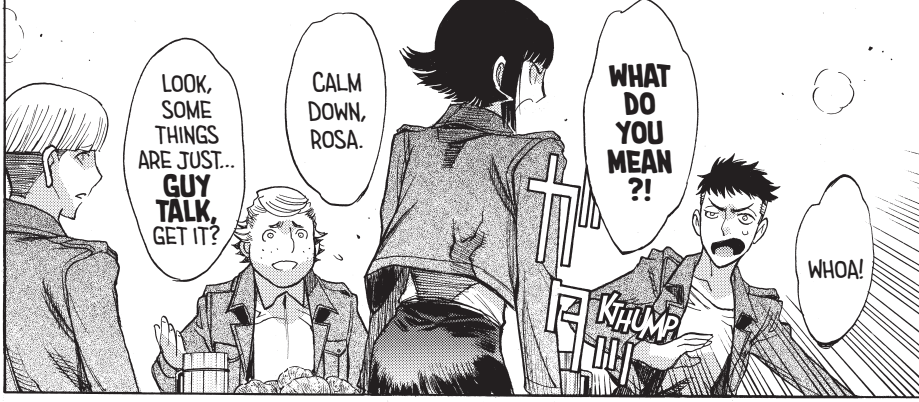
I'M... GLAD TO HEAR THAT.

I TRUST SHARLE, I TRUST KUKLO, AND I TRUST THE CAPTAIN AND SENIOR OFFICERS.
I'M NOT WORRIED.


!!
OH!
MORE IMPORTANTLY, WHAT YOU WERE WHISPERING ABOUT EARLIER?!

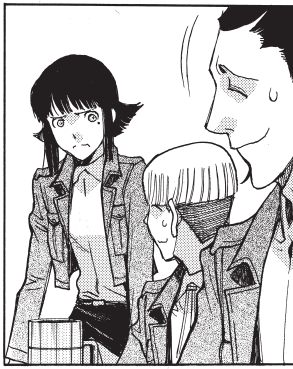

N-NO... WE WERE JUST...
YOU GUYS WEREN'T PLOTTING SOMETHING, WERE YOU?

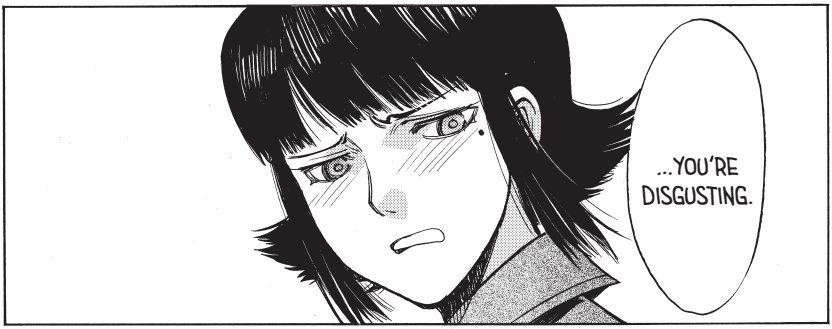
WHAT ?!
SOMETIMES GUYS HAVE SECRETS! SO BUTT OUT! NO GIRLS ALLOWED!
ROSA...

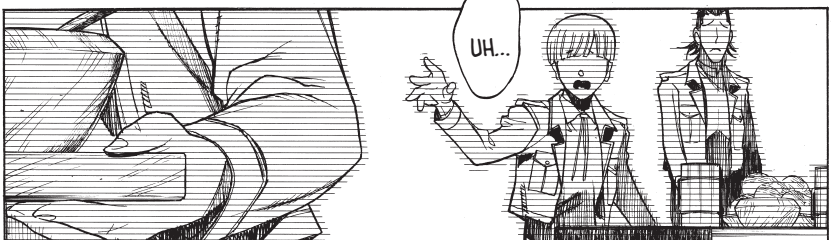

LOOK, SOME THINGS ARE JUST... GUY TALK, GET IT?
CALM DOWN, ROSA.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN ?!
WHOA!
KHUMP

ROSA?
TEK

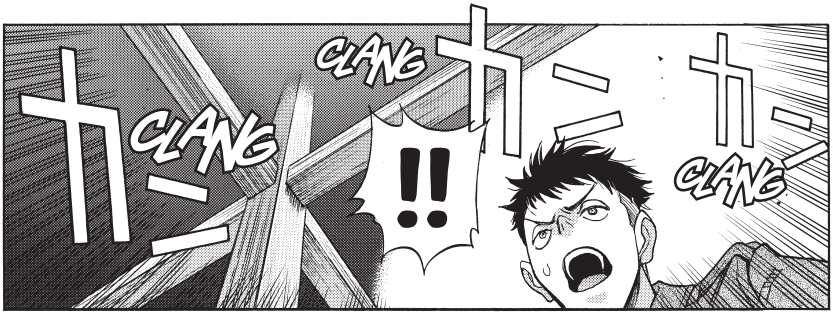
は、OH!



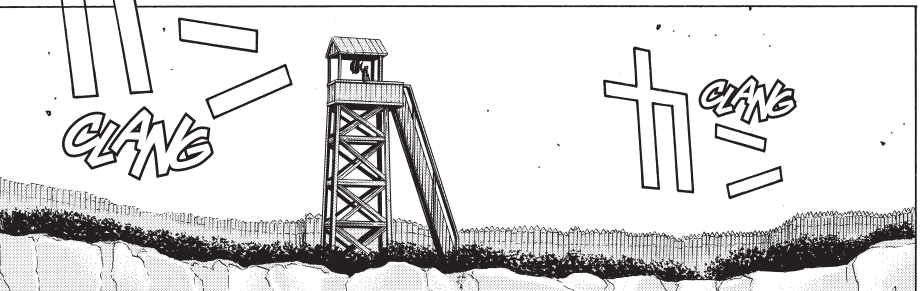

...YOU'RE DISGUSTING.


UH...

HUH? WHAT?
OH, NO...
...SHE'S DEFINITELY GOT THE WRONG IDEA ABOUT SOME-THING...


カーン
CLANG
CLANG
カーン
!!
カーン
CLANG

カ!!
CHOMP
EAT!
SCARF IT ALL DOWN !!
カ!!
CHOMP
OH, CRAP! BREAK-FAST'S ALMOST OVER!


カーン
CLANG
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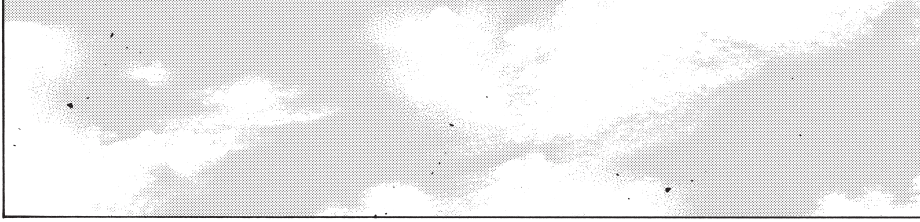
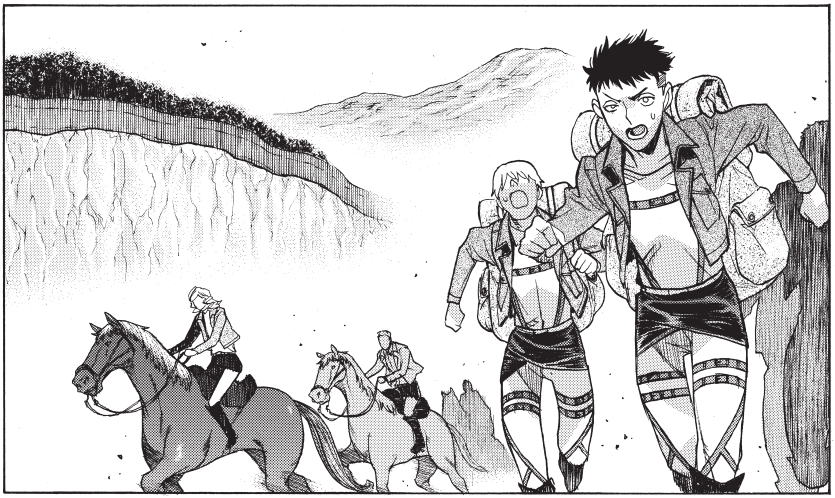
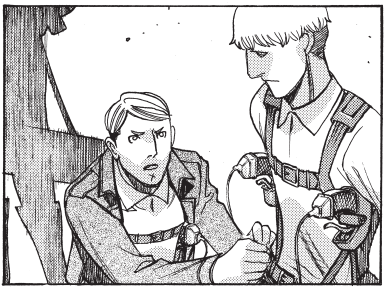
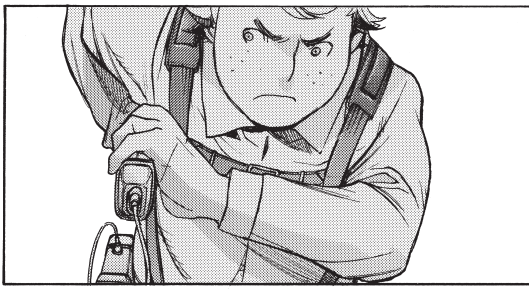
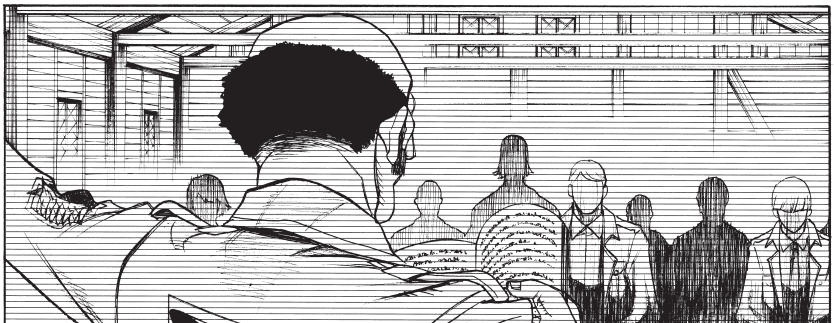
CLANG

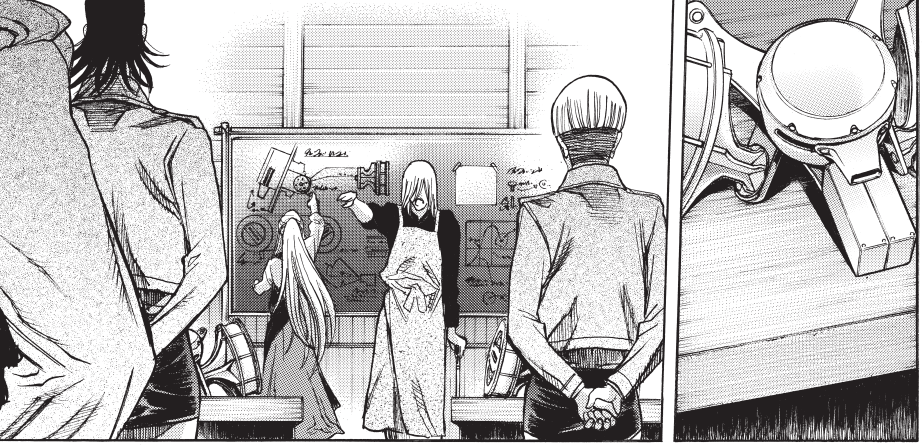


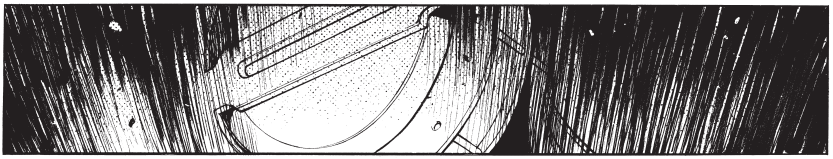


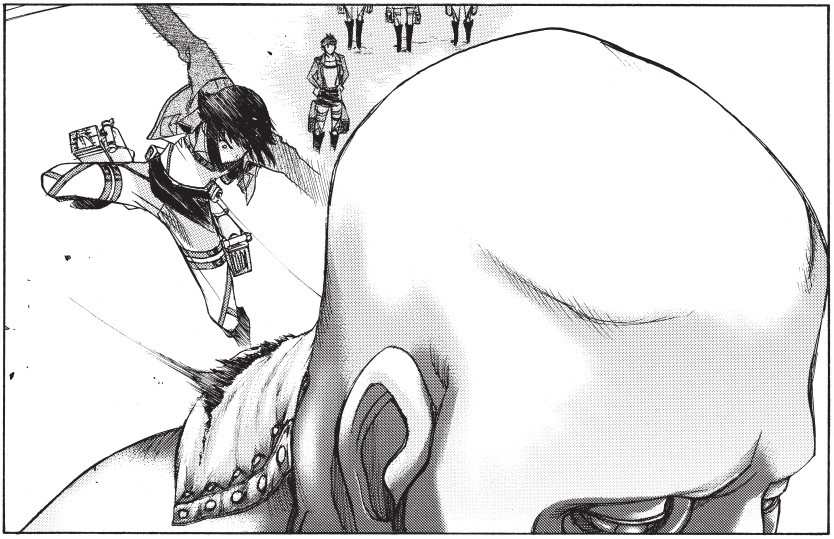








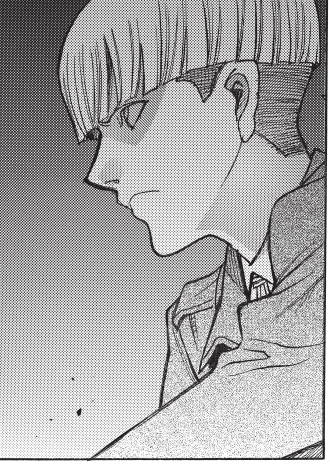




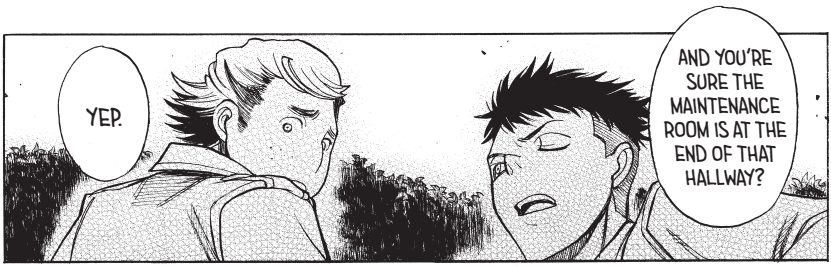
SURVEY CORPS TRAINING GROUNDS, OUT BACK, DINNER HOUR

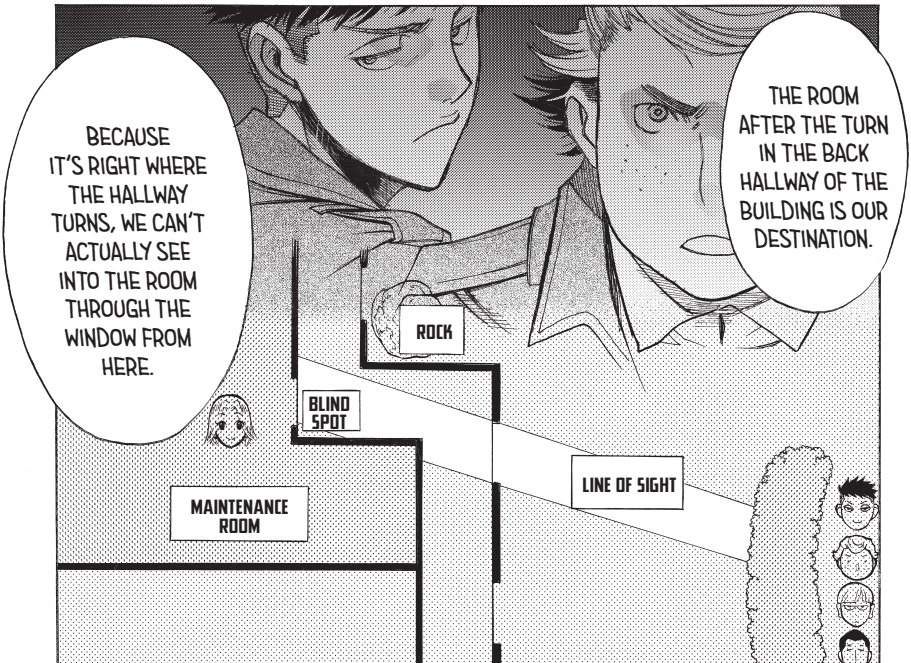
UGHHH...

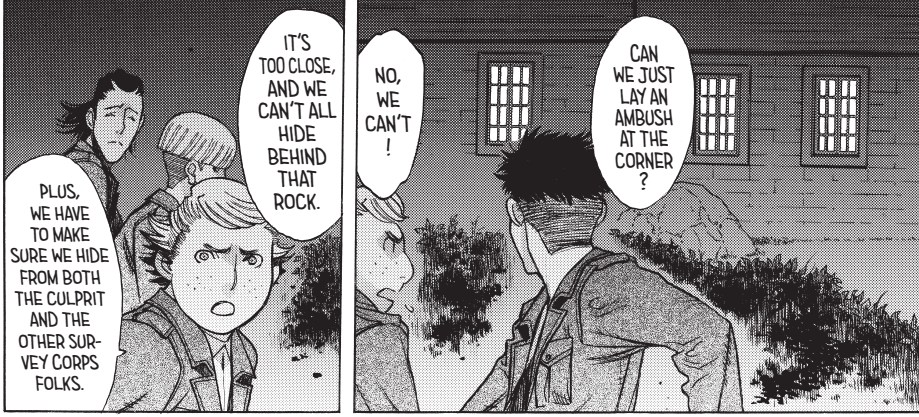
TODAY'S SESSION WAS BRUTAL...

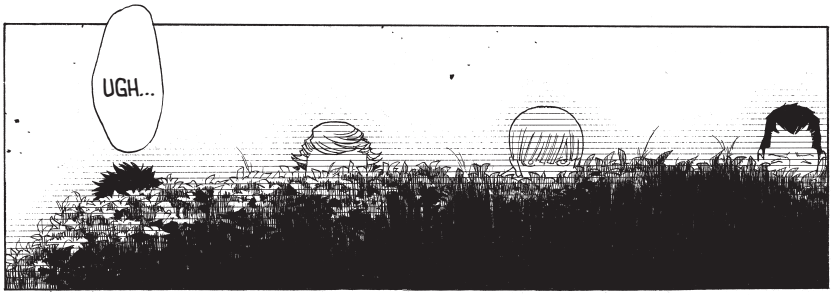


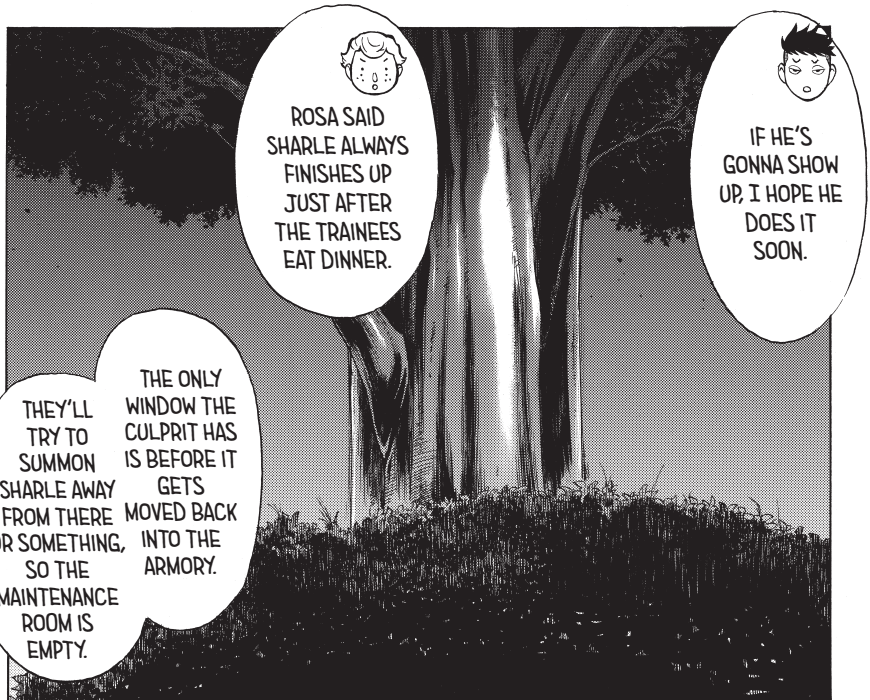
I'M SO... HUN-GRY...

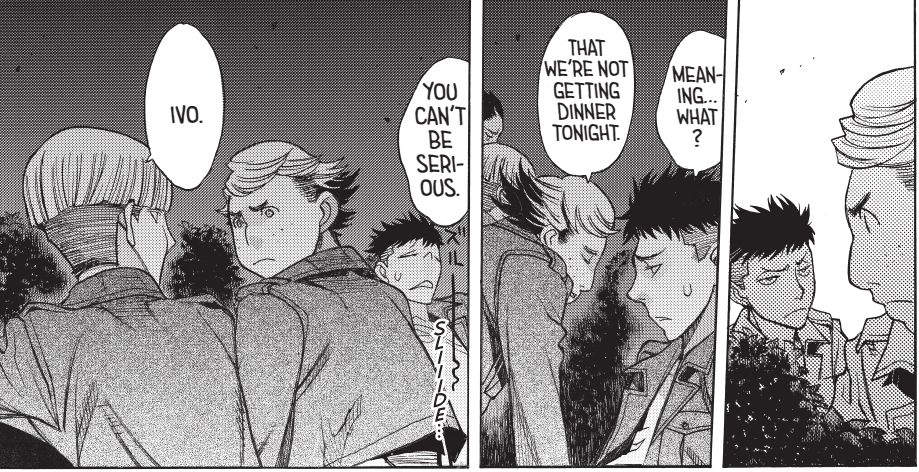

YEP.
AND YOU'RE SURE THE MAINTENANCE ROOM IS AT THE END OF THAT HALLWAY?


BECAUSE IT'S RIGHT WHERE THE HALLWAY TURNS, WE CAN'T ACTUALLY SEE INTO THE ROOM THROUGH THE WINDOW FROM HERE.
THE ROOM AFTER THE TURN IN THE BACK HALLWAY OF THE BUILDING IS OUR DESTINATION.
ROCK
BLIND SPOT
LINE OF SIGHT
MAINTENANCE ROOM


PLUS, WE HAVE TO MAKE SURE WE HIDE FROM BOTH THE CULPRIT AND THE OTHER SURVEY CORPS FOLKS.
IT'S TOO CLOSE, AND WE CAN'T ALL HIDE BEHIND THAT ROCK.
NO, WE CAN'T!
CAN WE JUST LAY AN AMBUSH AT THE CORNER?

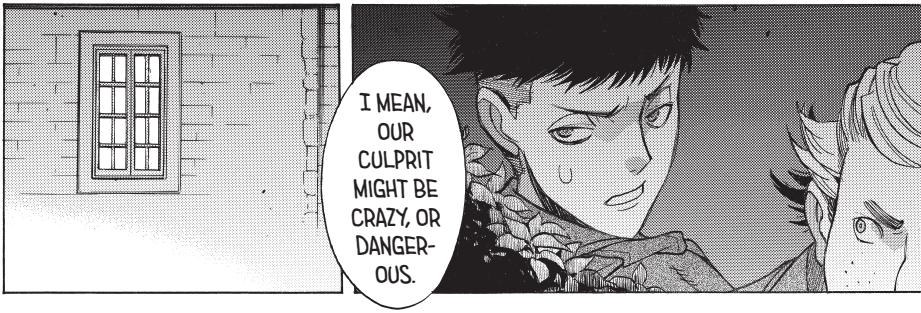

UGH...

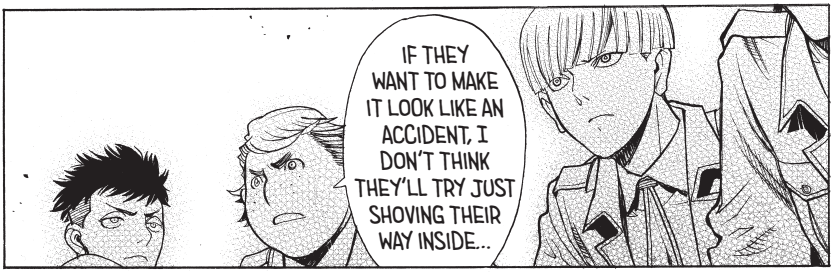

ROSA SAID SHARLE ALWAYS FINISHES UP JUST AFTER THE TRAINEES EAT DINNER.
IF HE'S GONNA SHOW UP, I HOPE HE DOES IT SOON.
THE ONLY WINDOW THE CULPRIT HAS IS BEFORE IT GETS MOVED BACK INTO THE ARMORY.
THEY'LL TRY TO SUMMON SHARLE AWAY FROM THERE OR SOMETHING, SO THE MAINTENANCE ROOM IS EMPTY.


IVO.
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS.
SLIIIDE...
THAT WE'RE NOT GETTING DINNER TONIGHT.
MEANING... WHAT?

EVEN IF SHARLE LEAVES THE ROOM, WON'T ANGEL BE THERE?
ANGEL LEFT FOR SHIGANSHINA THIS AFTERNOON ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS.
HE'S GOING TO STAY AT A HOTEL THERE BECAUSE IT'LL KEEP HIM LATE.

CAN SHE HANDLE ALL OF THAT ON HER OWN?
HUH?
SO SHARLE'S THE ONLY PERSON IN THE MAINTEN-ANCE ROOM NOW?

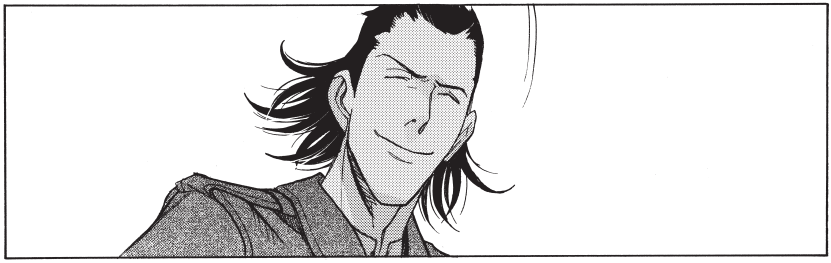

I MEAN, OUR CULPRIT MIGHT BE CRAZY, OR DANGER-OUS.

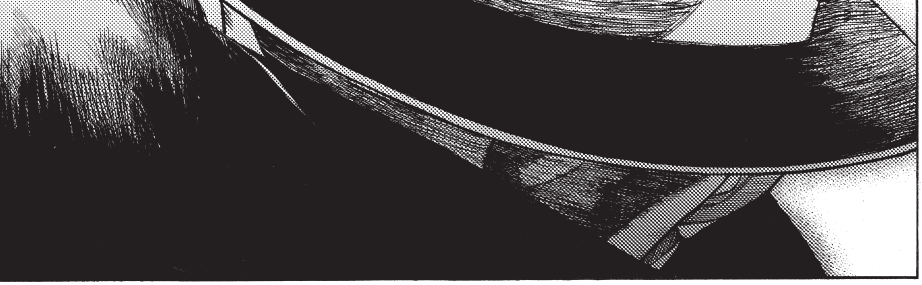

IF THEY WANT TO MAKE IT LOOK LIKE AN ACCIDENT, I DON'T THINK THEY'LL TRY JUST SHOVING THEIR WAY INSIDE...

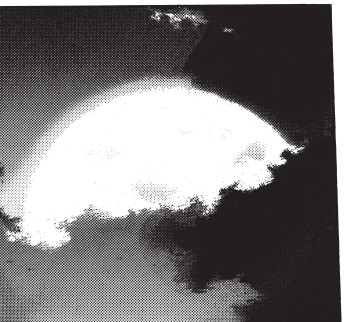
YEAH, IT'LL BE SEEN AS TRESPASSING INTO AN OFF-LIMITS AREA, AND WE'LL PROBABLY GET KICKED RIGHT OUTTA THE PROGRAM.
BUT IF WORST COMES TO WORST, LET'S RUSH IN THERE.

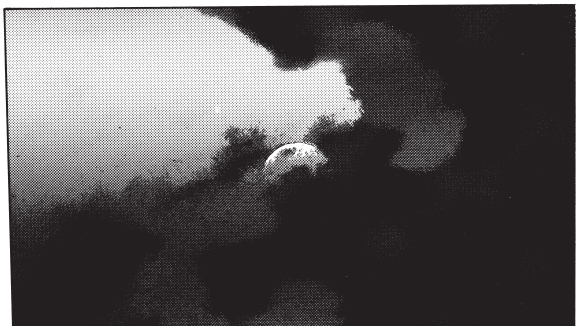
OF COURSE WE'RE IN.

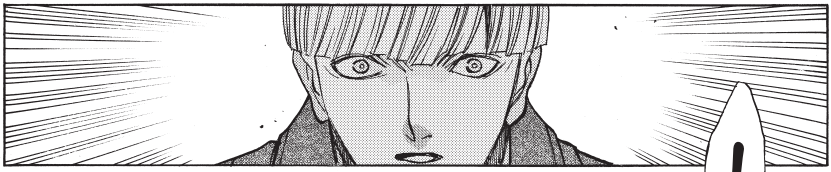
BUT THAT'S OKAY, RIGHT?
YOU BET!

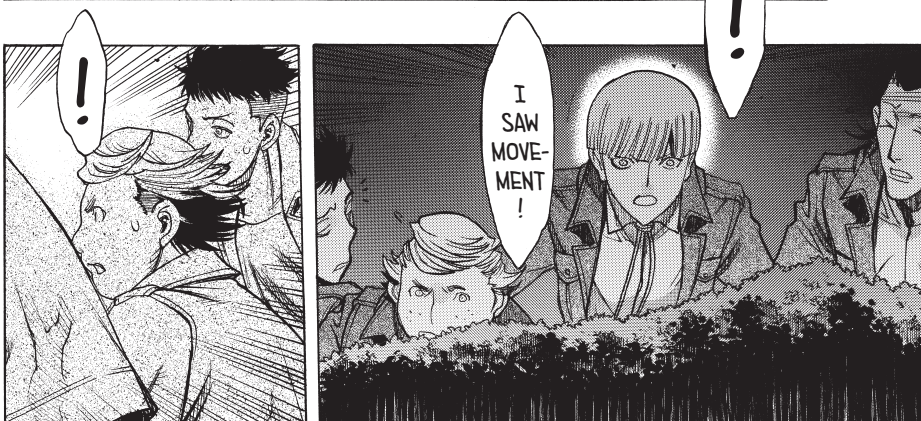


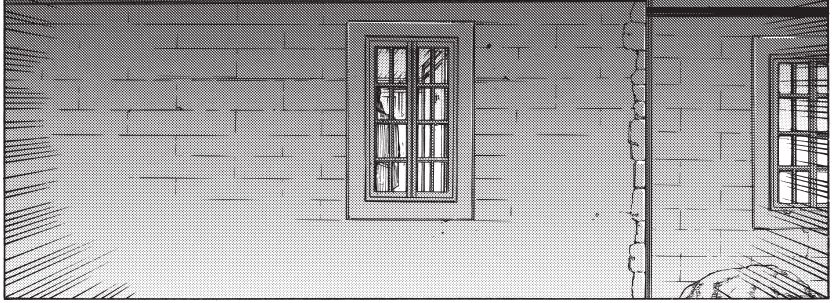




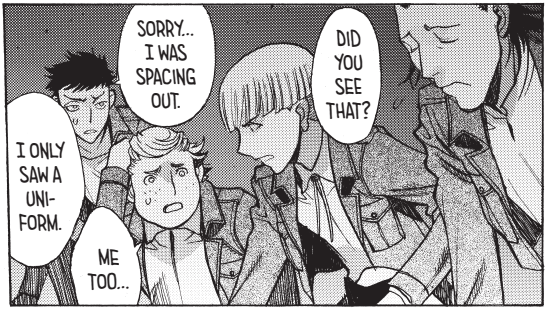


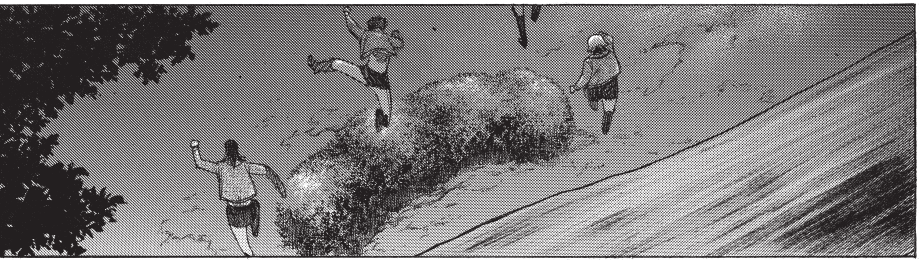



!
!
I SAW MOVE-MENT!

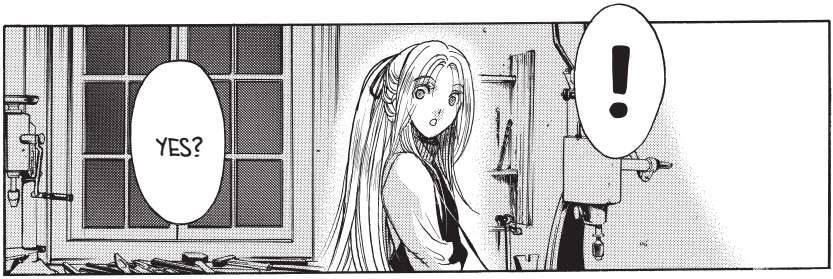


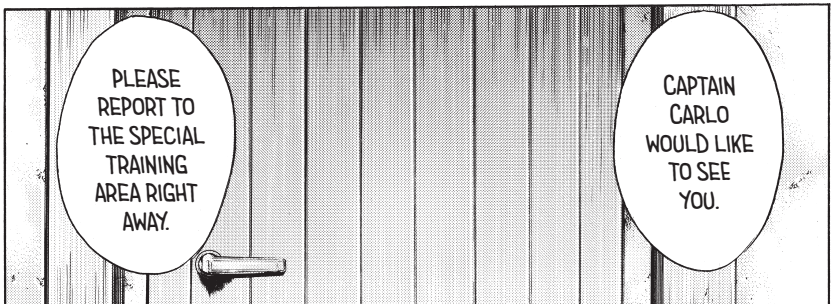
LET'S GO!
ZSH

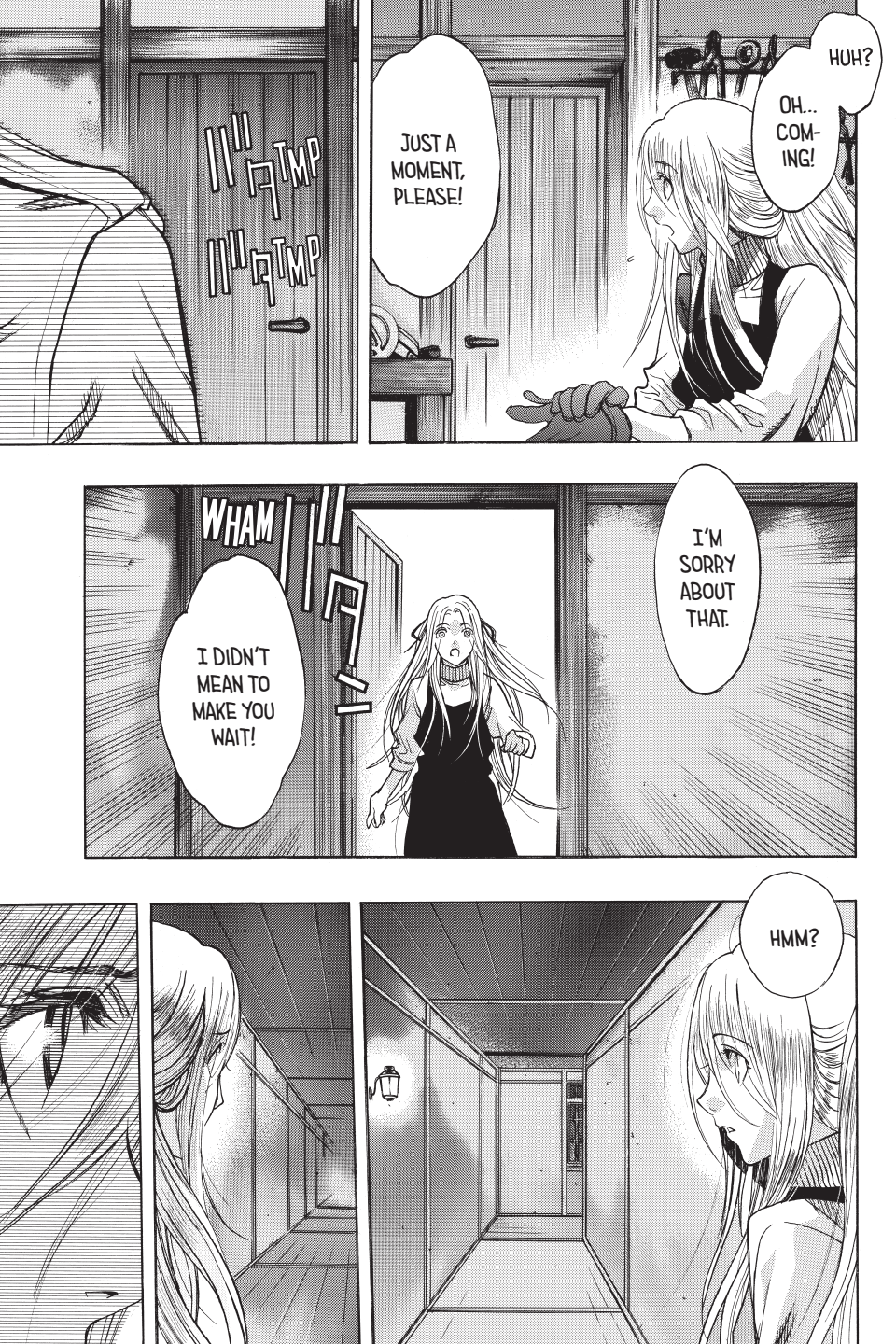

DID YOU SEE THAT?
SORRY... I WAS SPACING OUT.
I ONLY SAW A UNI-FORM.
ME TOO...

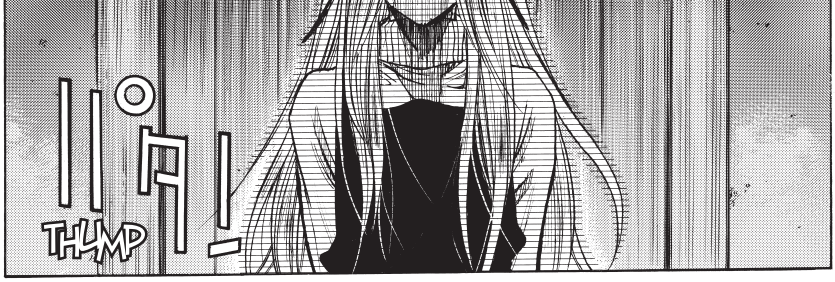


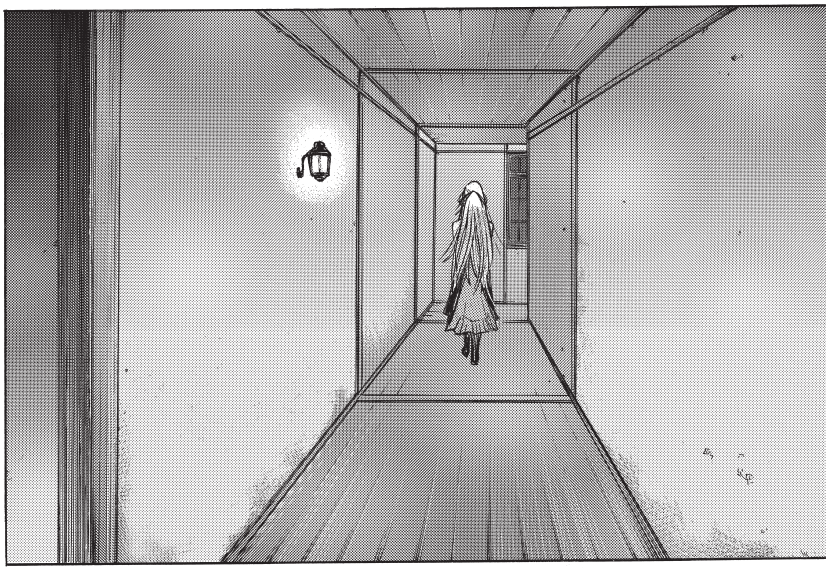
KNOCK コン
KNOCK コン

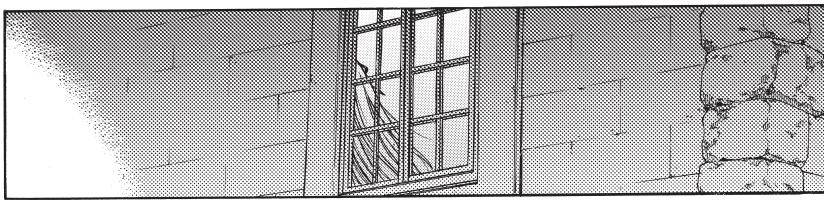

YES?
!

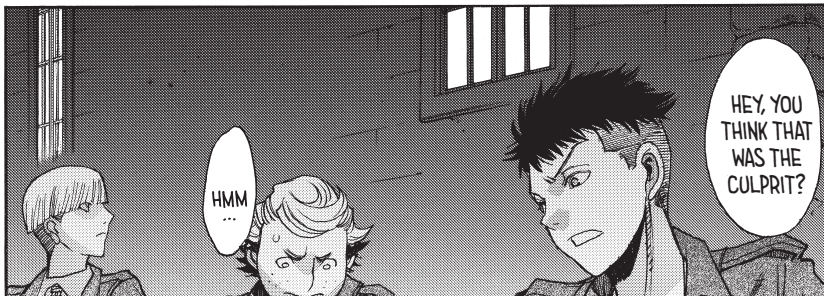

PLEASE REPORT TO THE SPECIAL TRAINING AREA RIGHT AWAY.
CAPTAIN CARLO WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOU.


TMP
TMP
JUST A MOMENT, PLEASE!
HUH?
OH... COM-ING!
WHAM
I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT.
I DIDN'T MEAN TO MAKE YOU WAIT!
HMM?


パタ!
THUMP

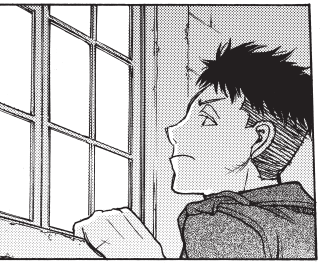


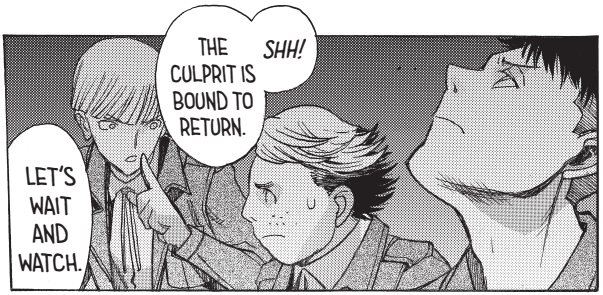


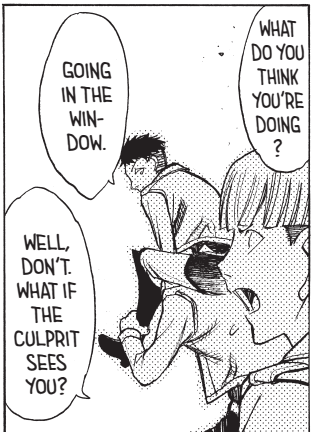

HEY, YOU THINK THAT WAS THE CULPRIT?
HMM ...

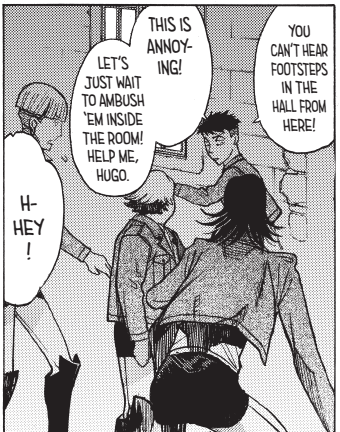
WE CAN'T TELL JUST YET.

COULD BE A REAL CALL.

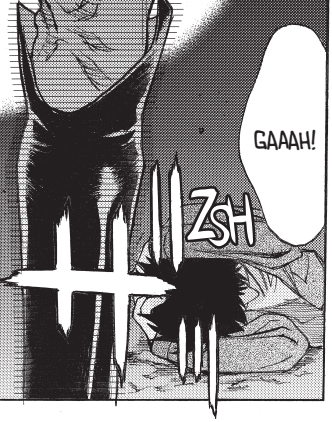






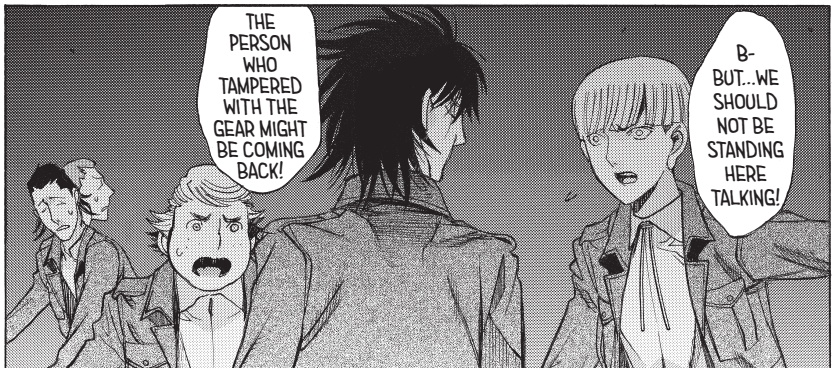


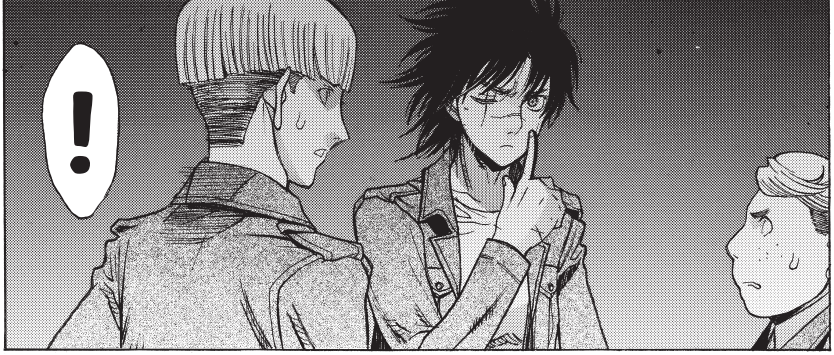
!!
I TOLD YOU TO LET ME GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS.


GAAAH!
ZSH

AIEE!
GONK

KUKLO...


THE PERSON WHO TAMPERED WITH THE GEAR MIGHT BE COMING BACK!
B-BUT...WE SHOULD NOT BE STANDING HERE TALKING!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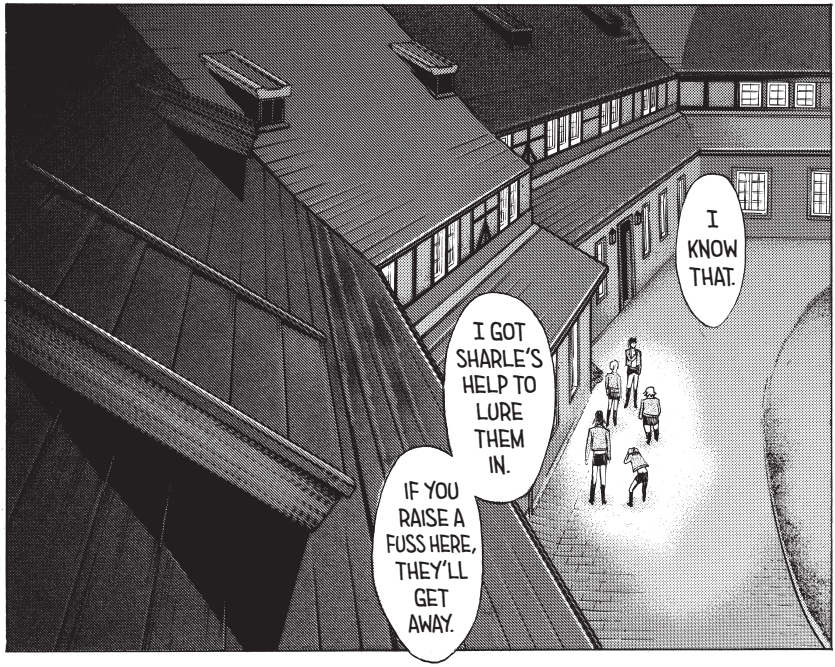
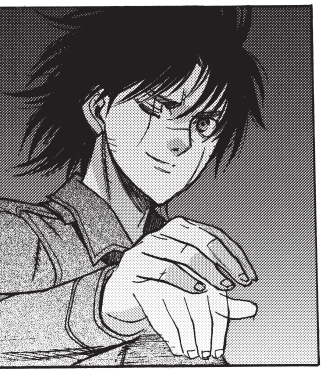
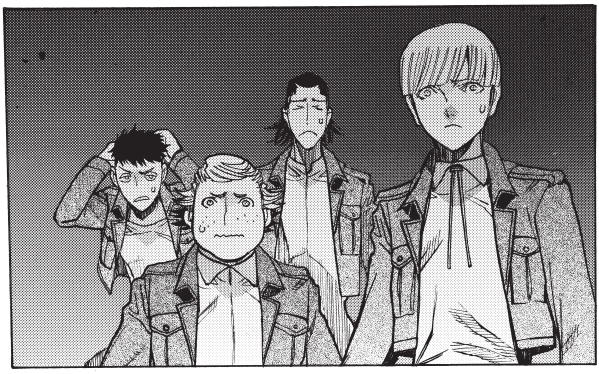

I KNOW THAT.
I GOT SHARLE'S HELP TO LURE THEM IN.
IF YOU RAISE A FUSS HERE, THEY'LL GET AWAY.

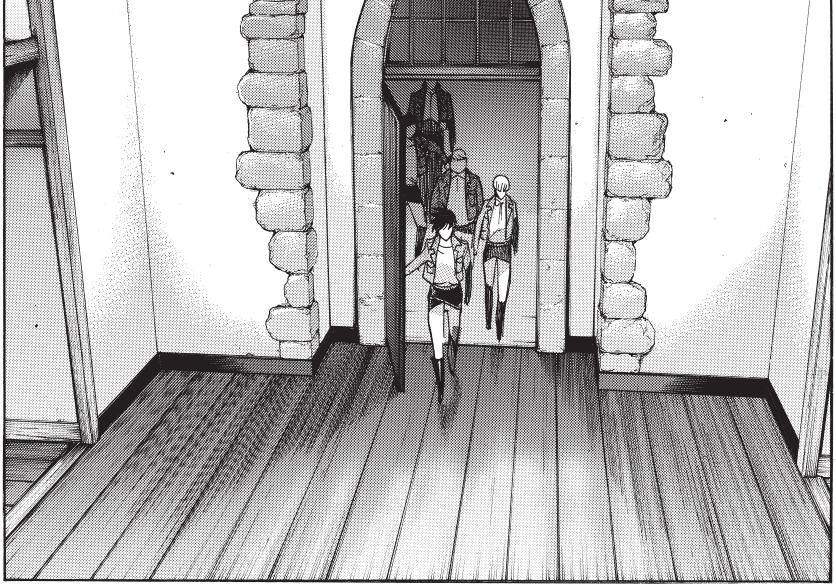
HUH?

BY THE DOOR, NOT THE WINDOW, OF COURSE.
LET'S TAKE OUR TIME GOING THERE.





WHAT'S GOING ON HERE...?



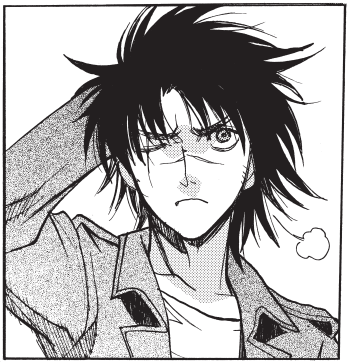
A-ARE WE ALLOWED TO DO THIS? JUST WALK THROUGH ...?
...YEAH, I KNOW...
KUKLO!

IF WE'RE TOO FAST, THE CULPRIT MIGHT DETECT THE TRAP BEFORE IT'S SET OFF.
...BUT...

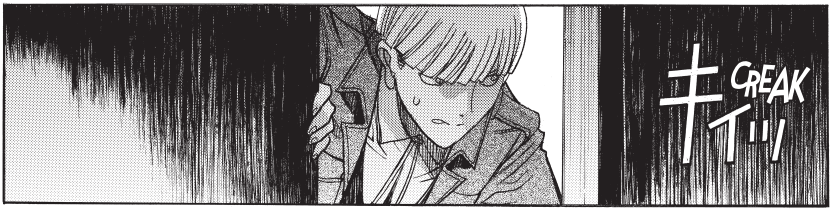
UM... WE'RE WALKING VERY LEISURELY. SHOULDN'T WE SPEED UP?
NO.

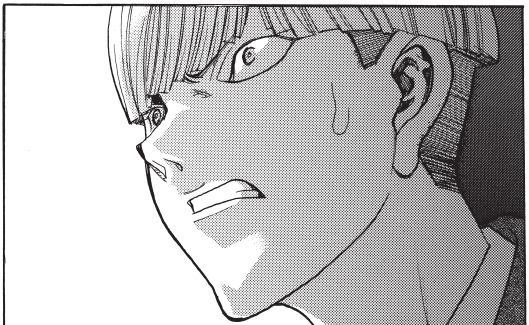
BOOOM
ドオォォォ

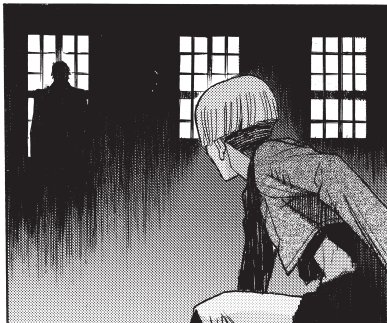
HEY! STOP !!



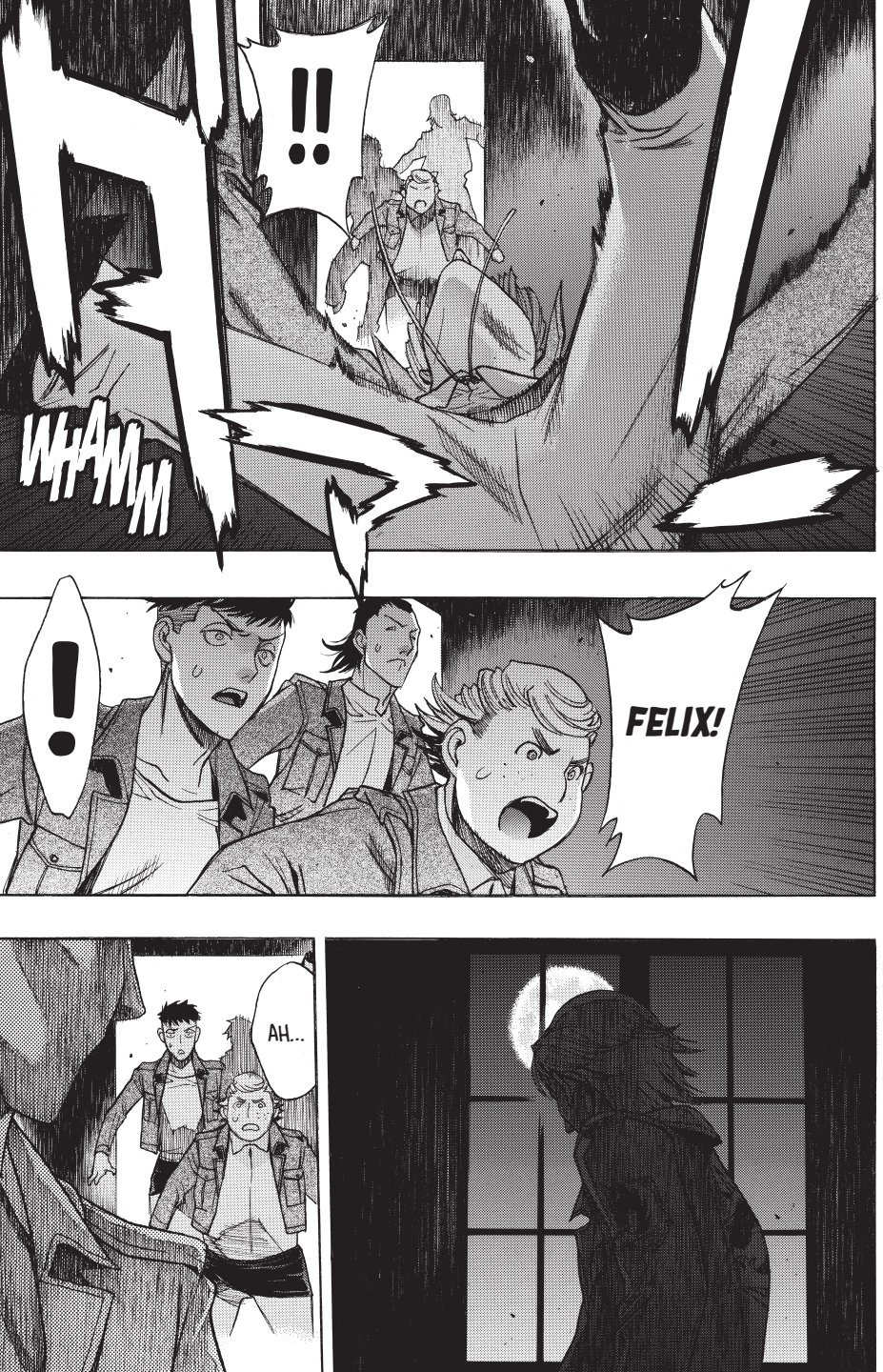
AH...
I-LET'S GO SEE...


キイッ
CREAK





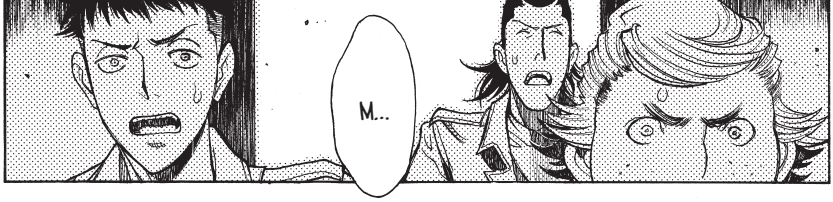
SO IT WAS YOU !!
HUH--
WHAM


!!
WHAMM
!
FELIX!
AH...

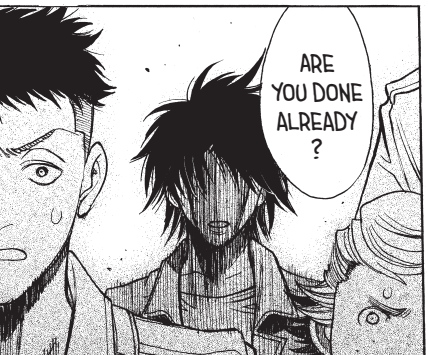
MONITOR INOCEN-CIO ?!!

Chapter 55: Box of Delusions · End

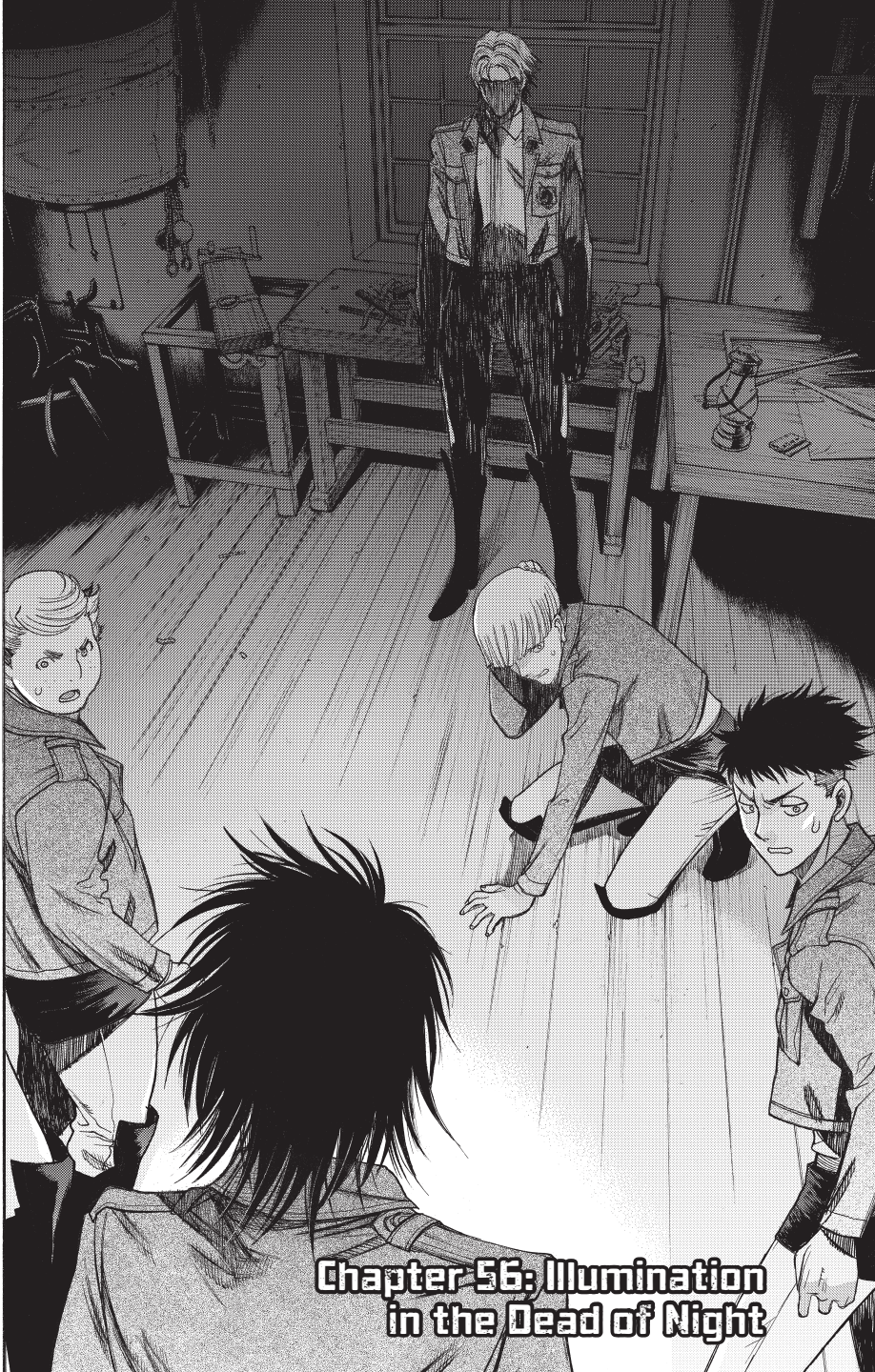
ATTACK ON TITAN
BEFORE THE FALL


M...

MONITOR INOCENCIO?!!


ARE YOU DONE ALREADY ?

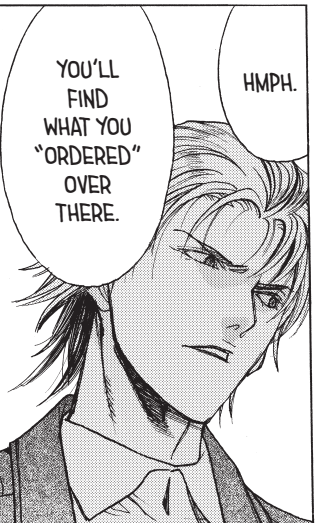
D... DAMN ...



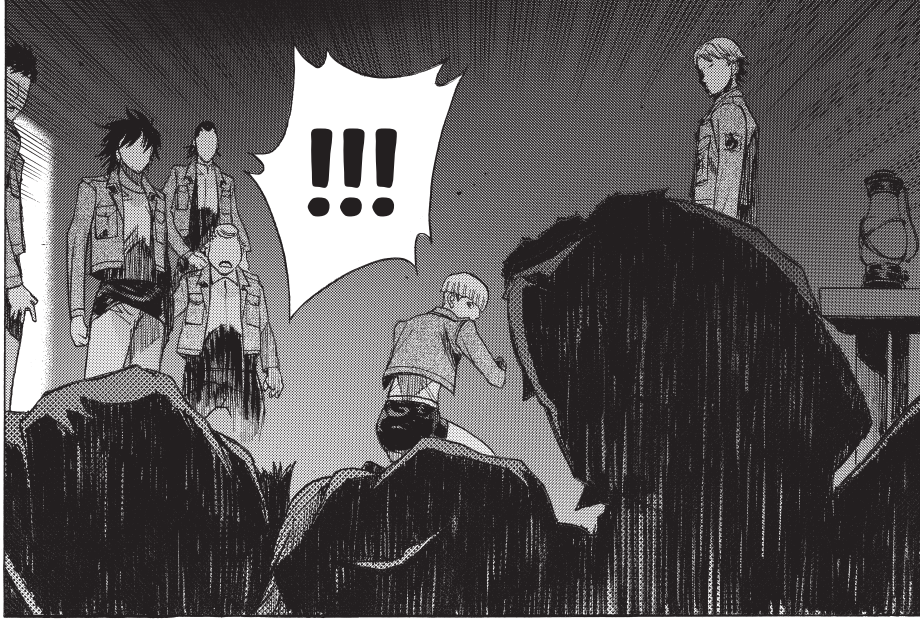
Chapter 56: Illumination in the Dead of Night

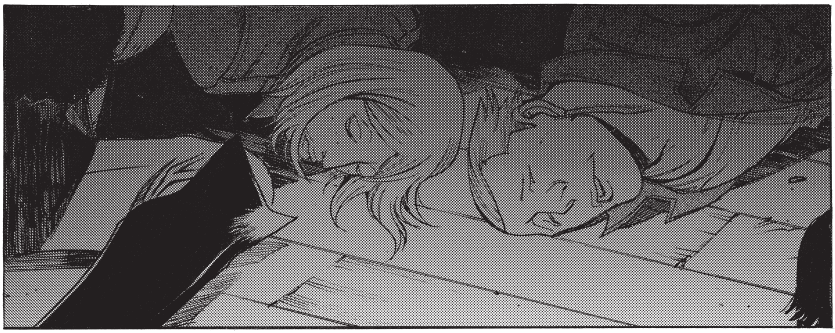
HUH ...?!

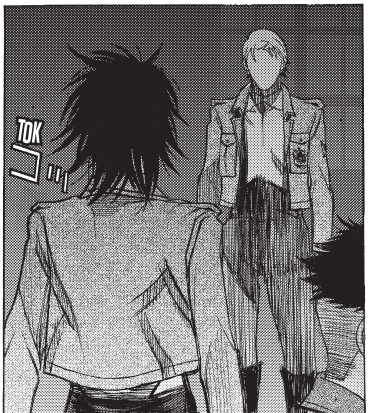
KUKLO ...?


HMPH.
YOU'LL FIND WHAT YOU "ORDERED" OVER THERE.

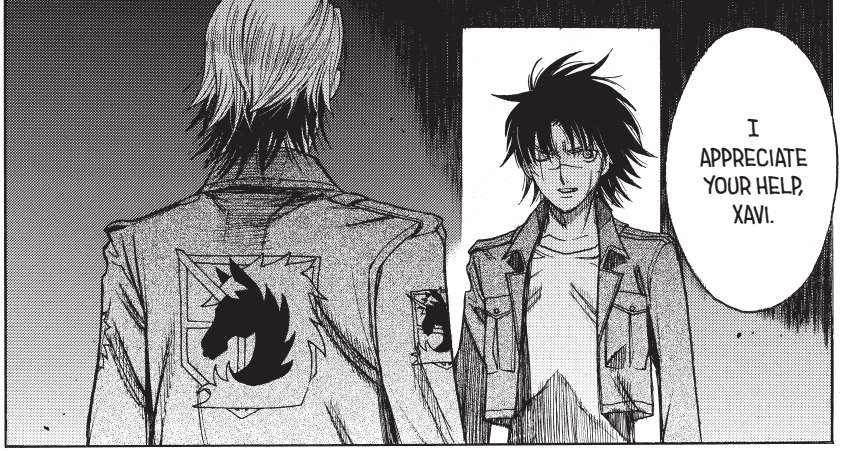
SO YOU PUT ME THROUGH THIS OBNOXIOUS HASSLE, AND **NOW** YOU SHOW UP?

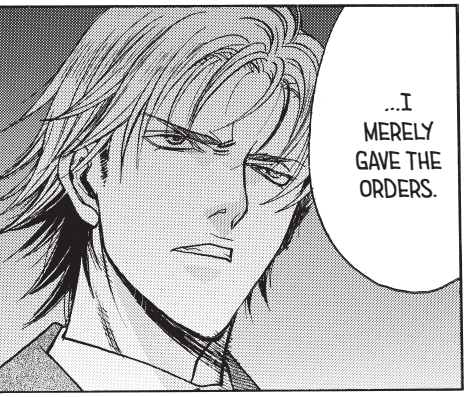

!!!

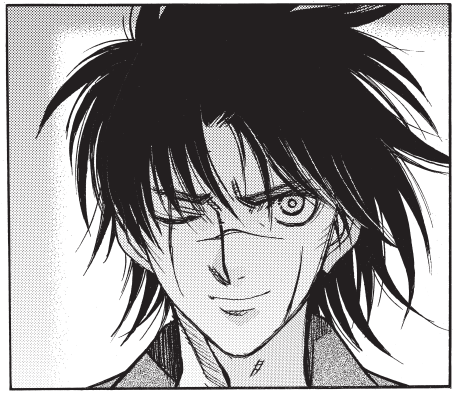


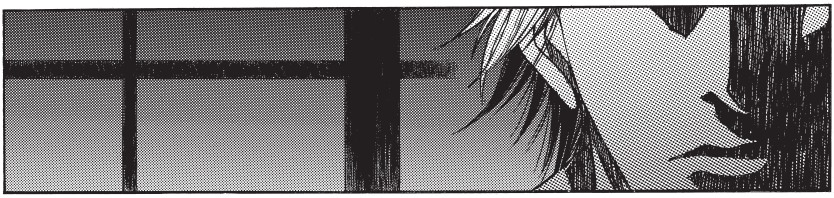

TOK

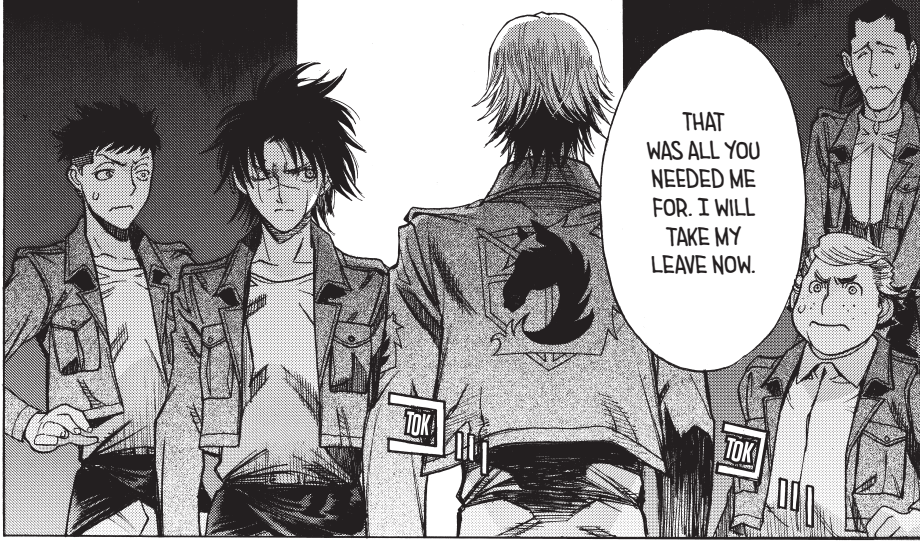
WHO ARE THEY ...?!

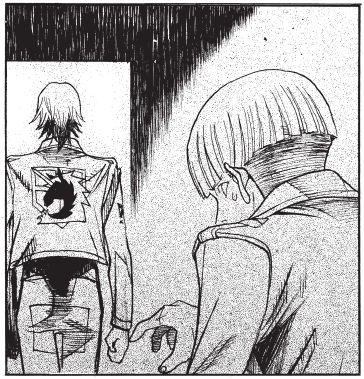

I APPRECIATE YOUR HELP, XAVI.

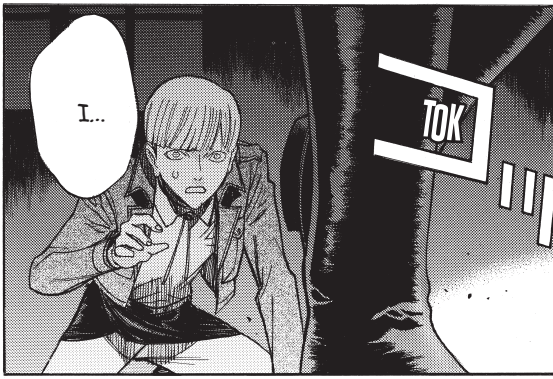

...I MERELY GAVE THE ORDERS.

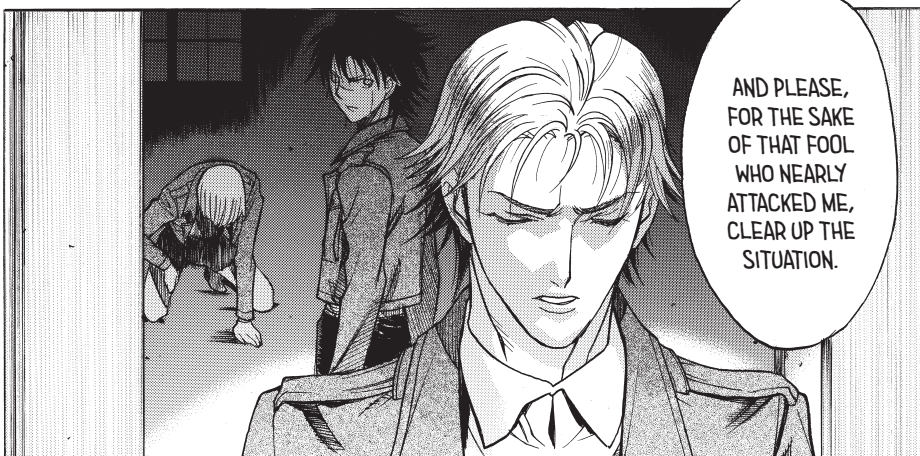


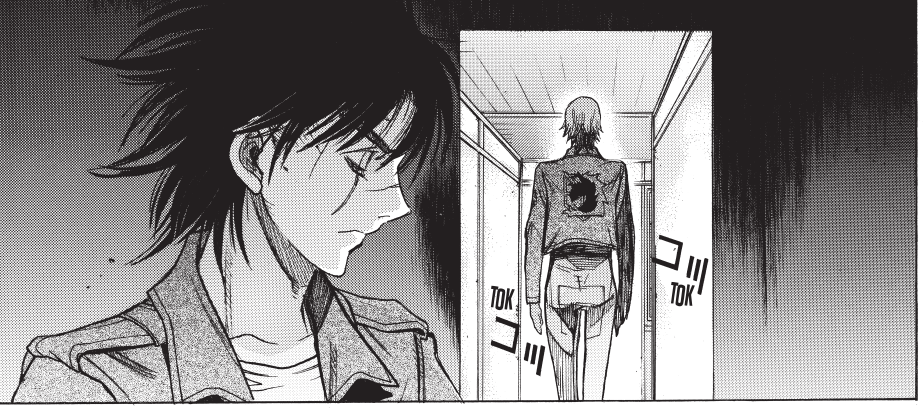



THAT WAS ALL YOU NEEDED ME FOR. I WILL TAKE MY LEAVE NOW.
TOK
TOK




I...
TOK


AND PLEASE, FOR THE SAKE OF THAT FOOL WHO NEARLY ATTACKED ME, CLEAR UP THE SITUATION.


TOK
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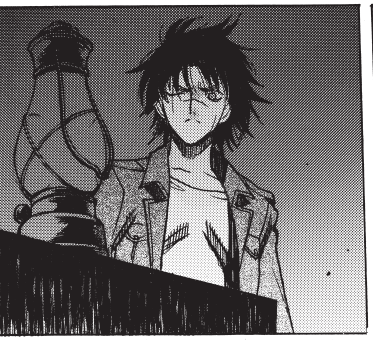
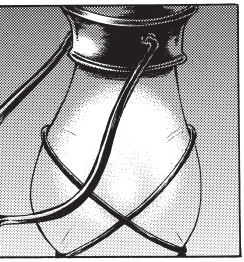
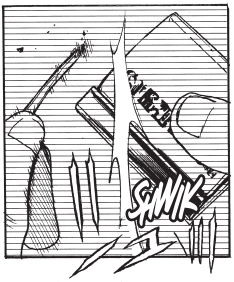
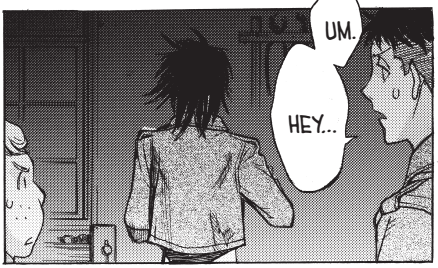
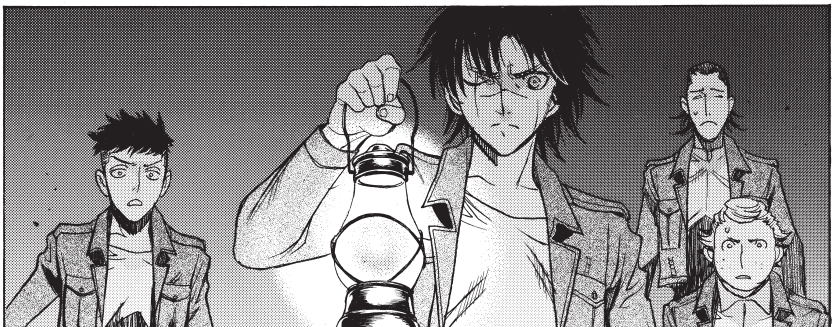


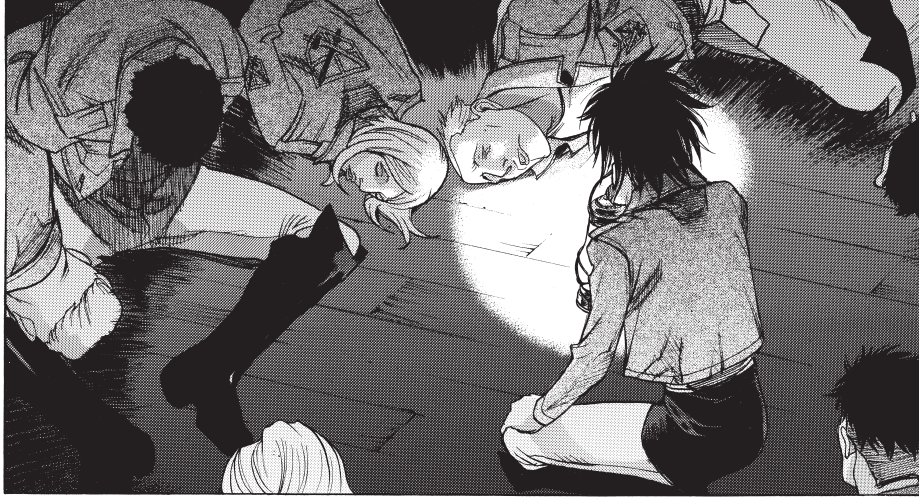
...!
WHAM
ドゴーン




SWIK

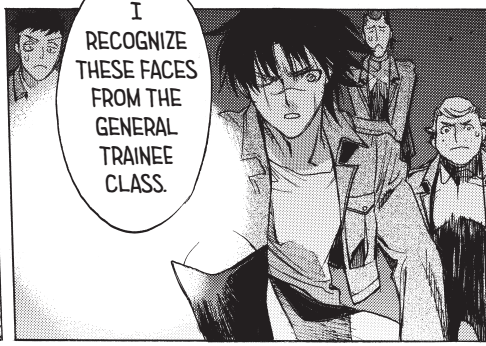

UM.
HEY...

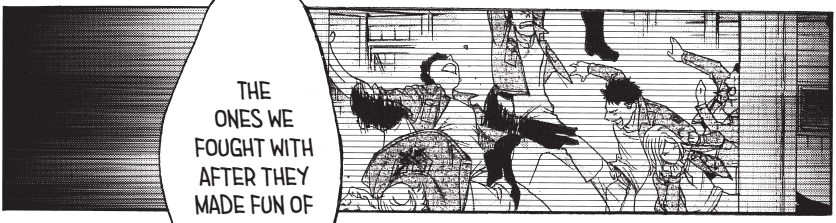


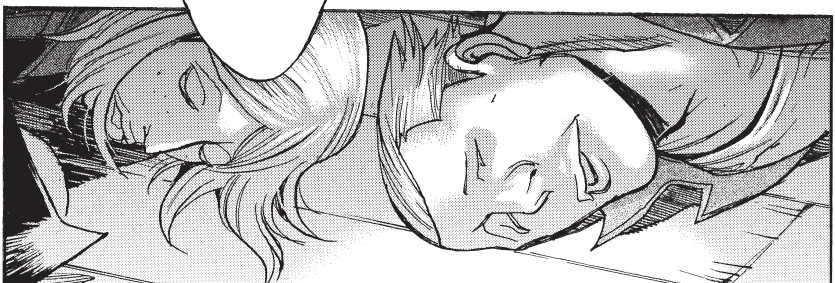


HEY! THESE ARE THE GUYS...
YEAH, I KNOW ...

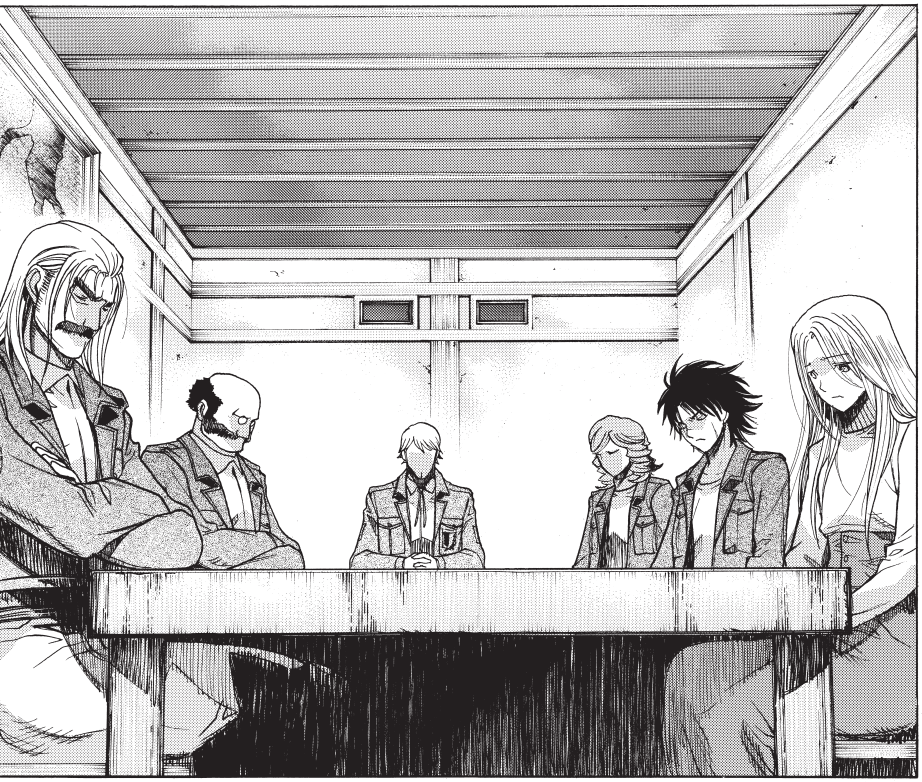
...!!

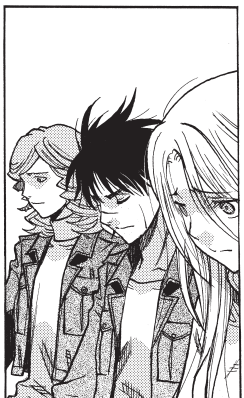

I RECOGNIZE THESE FACES FROM THE GENERAL TRAINEE CLASS.

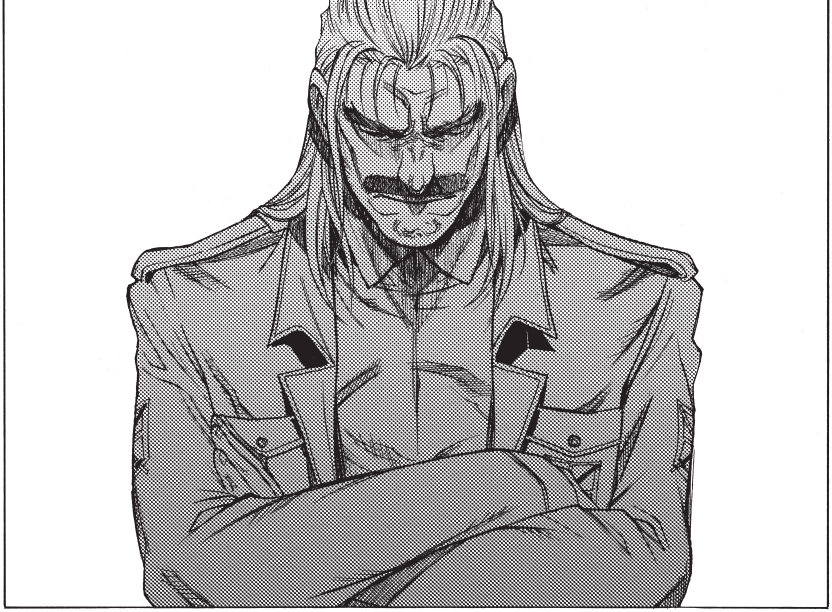


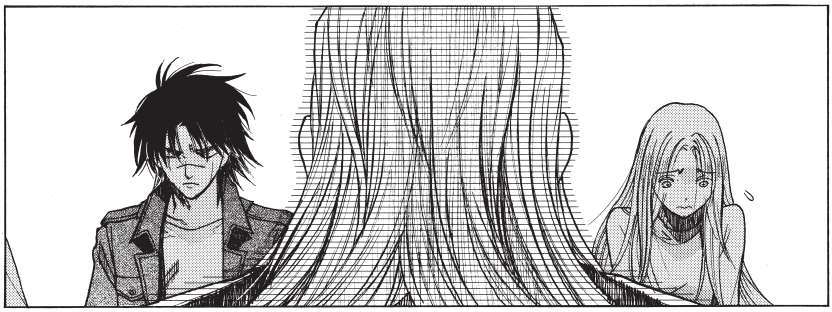

THE ONES WE FOUGHT WITH AFTER THEY MADE FUN OF ROSA...

MEETING ROOM







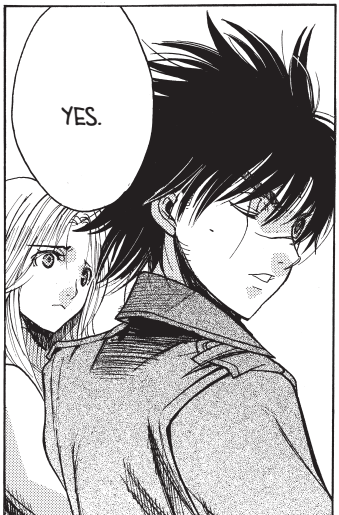


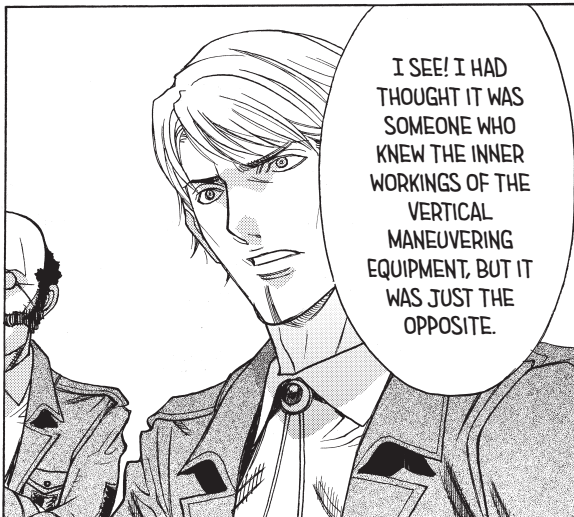
FIRST OF ALL...
MAY I HAVE AN EXPLANATION OF THIS INCIDENT FROM KUKLO?

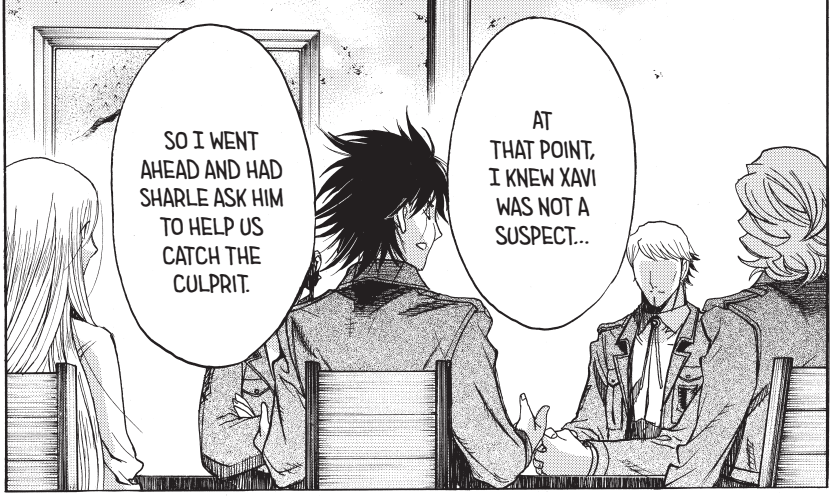
WHAT CONCERNED ME WITH THIS INCIDENT WAS THE SMALL SHARD OF METAL THAT DAMAGED THE WIRES OF THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT.
AHH.
WHEN I CHECKED WITH ANGEL AFTER YESTERDAY'S MEETING...
...HE SAID IT WAS THE TIP OF A KNIFE OR SOME OTHER KIND OF BLADE.

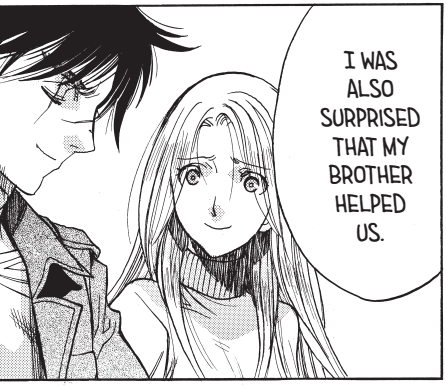
MEANING... THEY TRIED TO STICK THE KNIFE IN TO DAMAGE THE INTERNAL MECHANISM, ONLY TO LOSE THE TIP OF THE BLADE...
...AND THEN SWITCHED TO SABOTAGING THE LEATHER HARNESS?

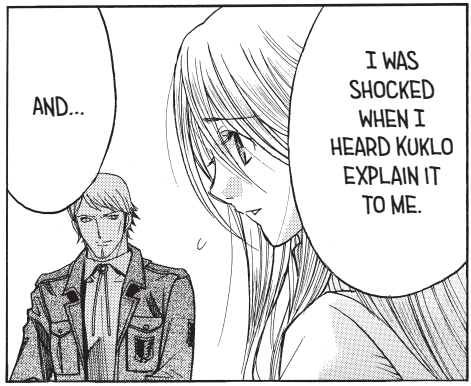
AN ORDINARY KNIFE CANNOT DESTROY THE EQUIPMENT ITSELF, WHICH IS MADE OF IRON BAMBOO.


YES.

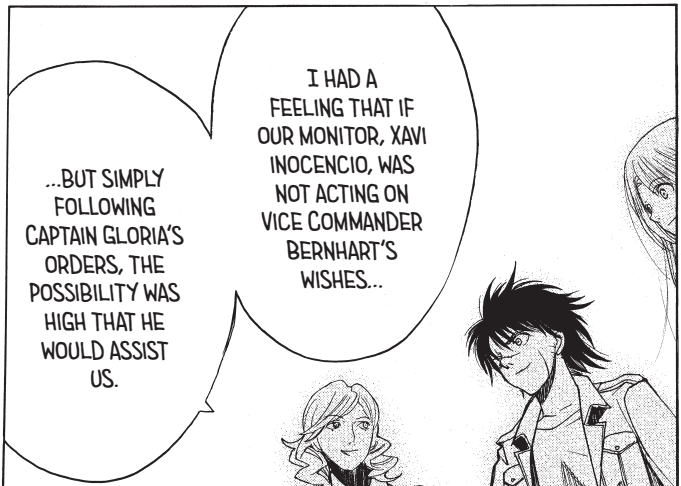

I SEE! I HAD THOUGHT IT WAS SOMEONE WHO KNEW THE INNER WORKINGS OF THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT, BUT IT WAS JUST THE OPPOSITE.


SO I WENT AHEAD AND HAD SHARLE ASK HIM TO HELP US CATCH THE CULPRIT.
AT THAT POINT, I KNEW XAVI WAS NOT A SUSPECT...

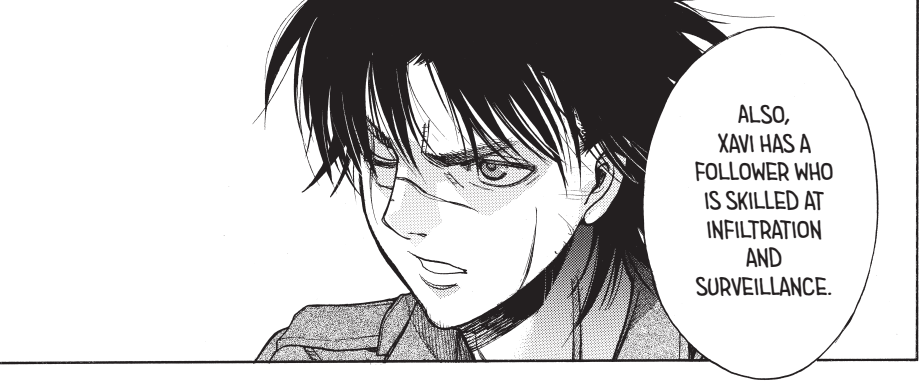

I WAS ALSO SURPRISED THAT MY BROTHER HELPED US.


AND...
I WAS SHOCKED WHEN I HEARD KUKLO EXPLAIN IT TO ME.

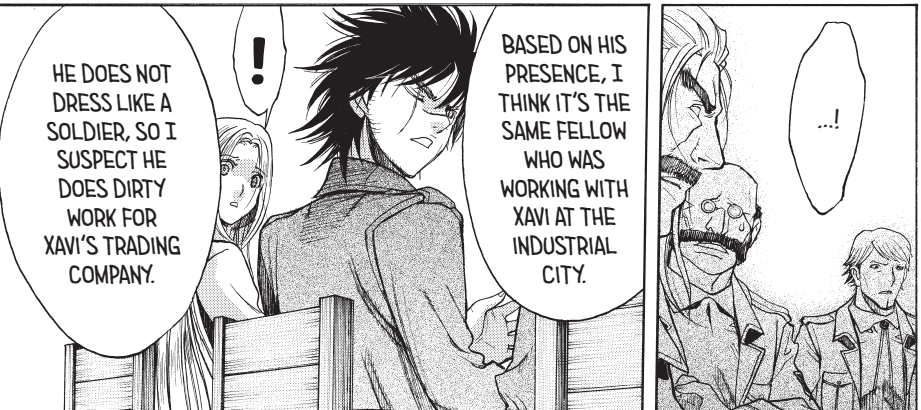
AH, I SEE.


...BUT SIMPLY FOLLOWING CAPTAIN GLORIA'S ORDERS, THE POSSIBILITY WAS HIGH THAT HE WOULD ASSIST US.
I HAD A FEELING THAT IF OUR MONITOR, XAVI INOCENCIO, WAS NOT ACTING ON VICE COMMANDER BERNHART'S WISHES...

BUT WHY DID YOU ASK MONITOR INOCENCIO FOR HELP?
COULDN'T YOU HAVE SIMPLY CAUGHT THE CULPRITS ON YOUR OWN?
YES, THAT MAKES SENSE.
WHICH MEANT THAT THEY WOULD BE WARY OF ME AND KUKLO.
AND THE SURVEY CORPS MEMBERS, OF COURSE.
GIVEN THE PRESUMED TIME AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE SABOTAGE, WE CONSIDERED THAT THE CULPRIT WAS LIKELY SOMEONE FROM WITHIN THE TRAINING GROUNDS.

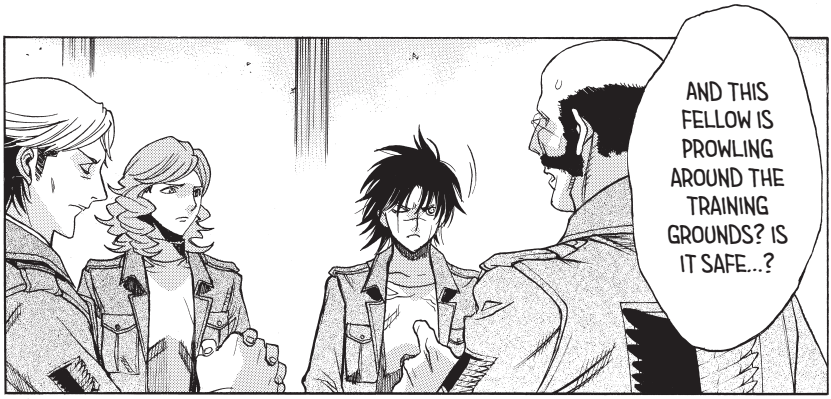

ALSO, XAVI HAS A FOLLOWER WHO IS SKILLED AT INFILTRATION AND SURVEILLANCE.

?!?
HE WAS THE ONE LISTENING THROUGH THE DOOR AT YESTERDAY'S MEETING.

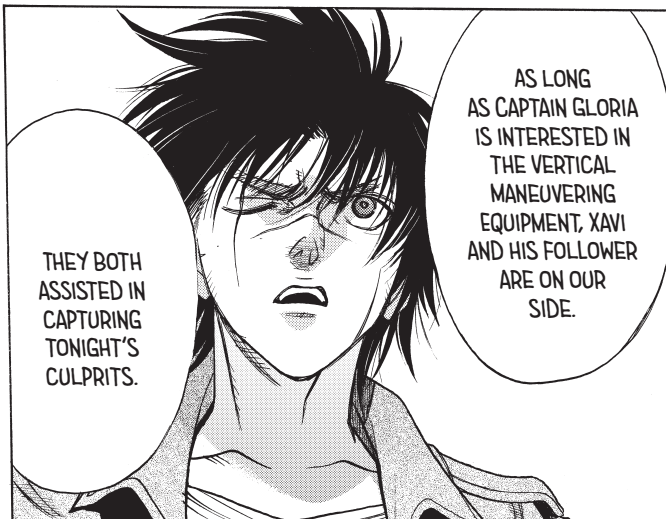

HE DOES NOT DRESS LIKE A SOLDIER, SO I SUSPECT HE DOES DIRTY WORK FOR XAVI'S TRADING COMPANY.
!
BASED ON HIS PRESENCE, I THINK IT'S THE SAME FELLOW WHO WAS WORKING WITH XAVI AT THE INDUSTRIAL CITY.
...!

M-MY GOOD-NESS...

YOU MEAN... THE ONE WHO...?

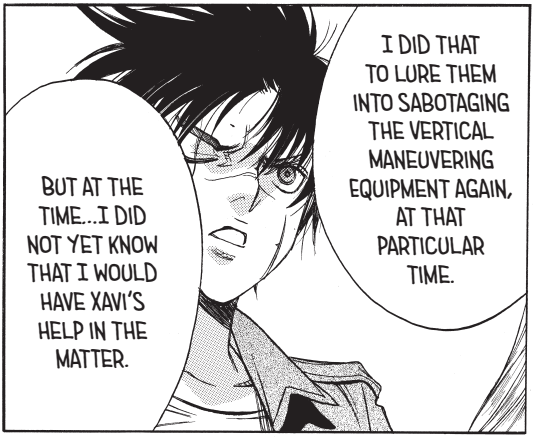

AND THIS FELLOW IS PROWLING AROUND THE TRAINING GROUNDS? IS IT SAFE...?

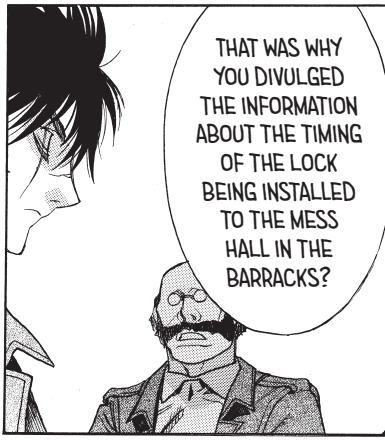
B-BUT...
VICE CAP-TAIN!

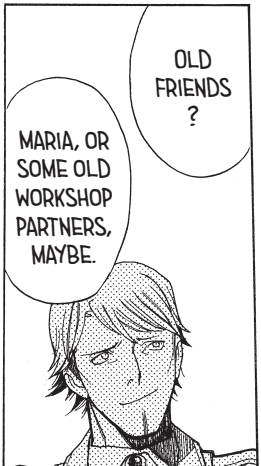

AS LONG AS CAPTAIN GLORIA IS INTERESTED IN THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT, XAVI AND HIS FOLLOWER ARE ON OUR SIDE.
THEY BOTH ASSISTED IN CAPTURING TONIGHT'S CULPRITS.

I CAN ACCEPT THIS.
LET'S TRUST IN MONITOR INOCENCIO...
OR MORE ACCURATELY, TRUST IN KUKLO'S VIEW OF HIM.
BACK TO THE TOPIC.

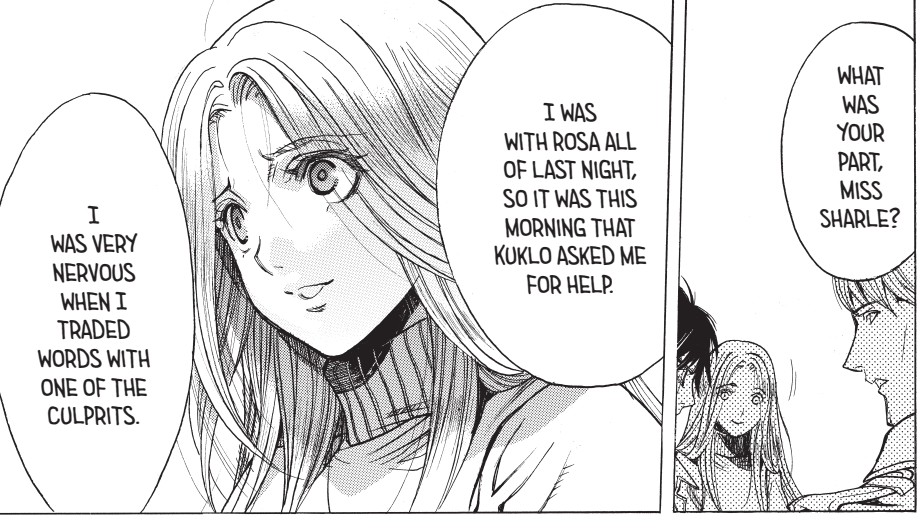
SO YOU USED HIS HELP TO PLACE A TRAP ON THE MAINTENANCE ROOM?

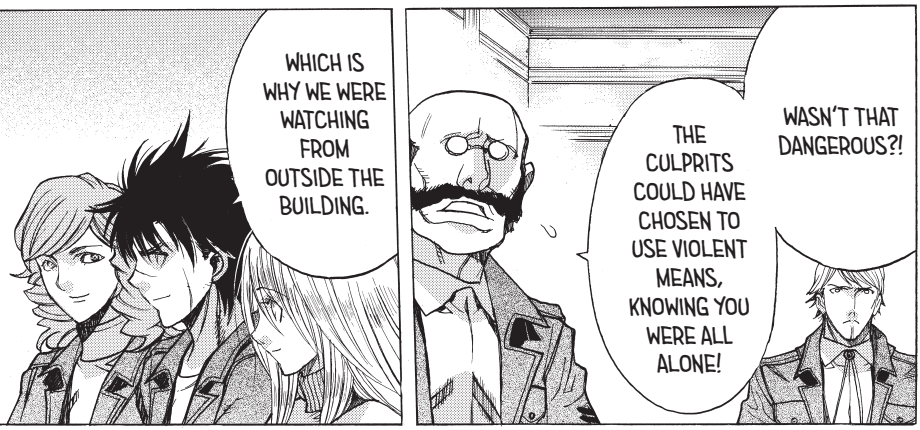

I DID THAT TO LURE THEM INTO SABOTAGING THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT AGAIN, AT THAT PARTICULAR TIME.
BUT AT THE TIME...I DID NOT YET KNOW THAT I WOULD HAVE XAVI'S HELP IN THE MATTER.


THAT WAS WHY YOU DIVULGED THE INFORMATION ABOUT THE TIMING OF THE LOCK BEING INSTALLED TO THE MESS HALL IN THE BARRACKS?

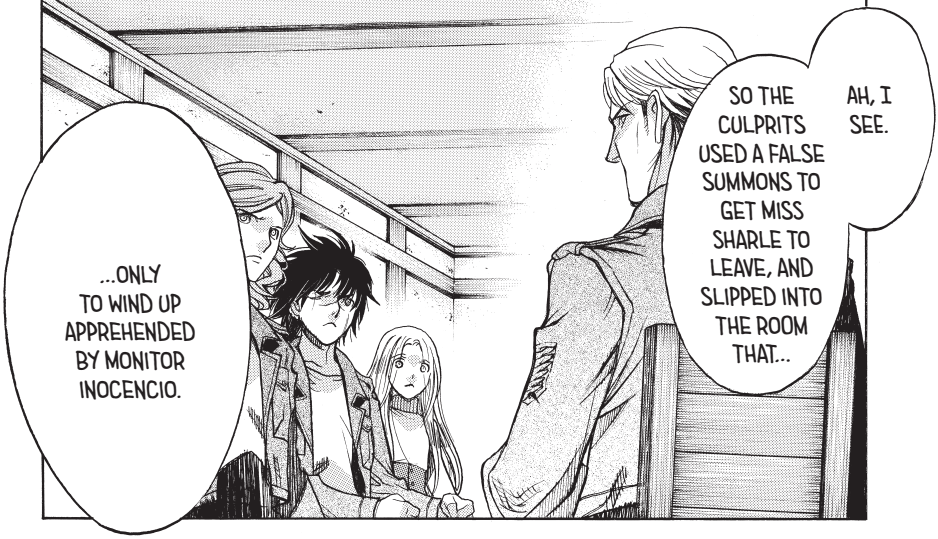

OLD FRIENDS ?
MARIA, OR SOME OLD WORKSHOP PARTNERS, MAYBE.

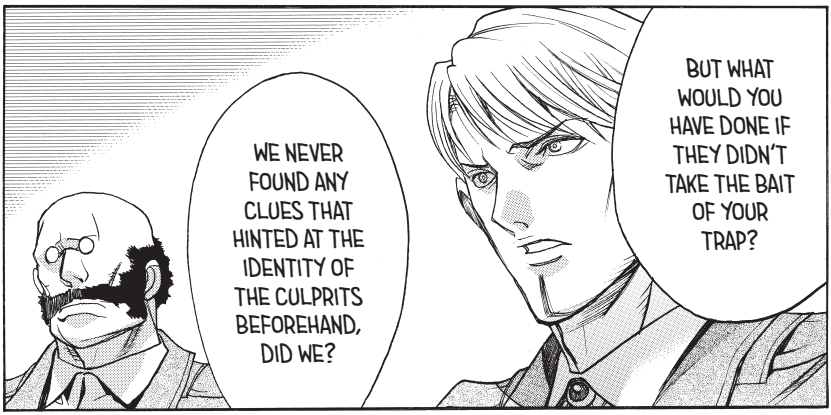
WE ALSO HAD ANGEL VISIT SHIGANSHINA DISTRICT TO REQUEST A LOCK FOR THE DOOR...
...AND ASKED HIM TO STAY THERE AT A HOTEL, SO THAT HE WOULDN'T BE PRESENT AT THE MAINTENANCE ROOM.
HE WAS HAPPY FOR THE CHANCE TO DRINK WITH OLD FRIENDS.

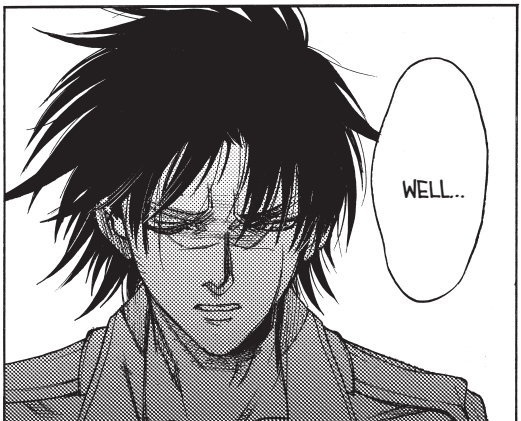

WHAT WAS YOUR PART, MISS SHARLE?
I WAS WITH ROSA ALL OF LAST NIGHT, SO IT WAS THIS MORNING THAT KUKLO ASKED ME FOR HELP.
I WAS VERY NERVOUS WHEN I TRADED WORDS WITH ONE OF THE CULPRITS.


WASN'T THAT DANGEROUS?!
THE CULPRITS COULD HAVE CHOSEN TO USE VIOLENT MEANS, KNOWING YOU WERE ALL ALONE!
WHICH IS WHY WE WERE WATCHING FROM OUTSIDE THE BUILDING.

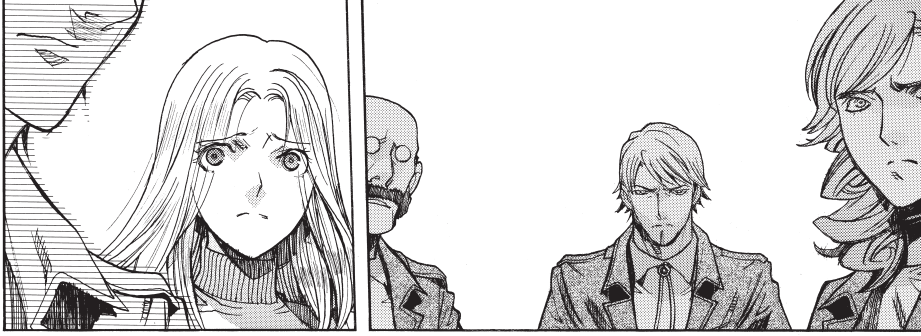
AND JUST IN CASE, WE HAD XAVI SECRETLY WAITING INSIDE THE MAINTENANCE ROOM ALREADY.

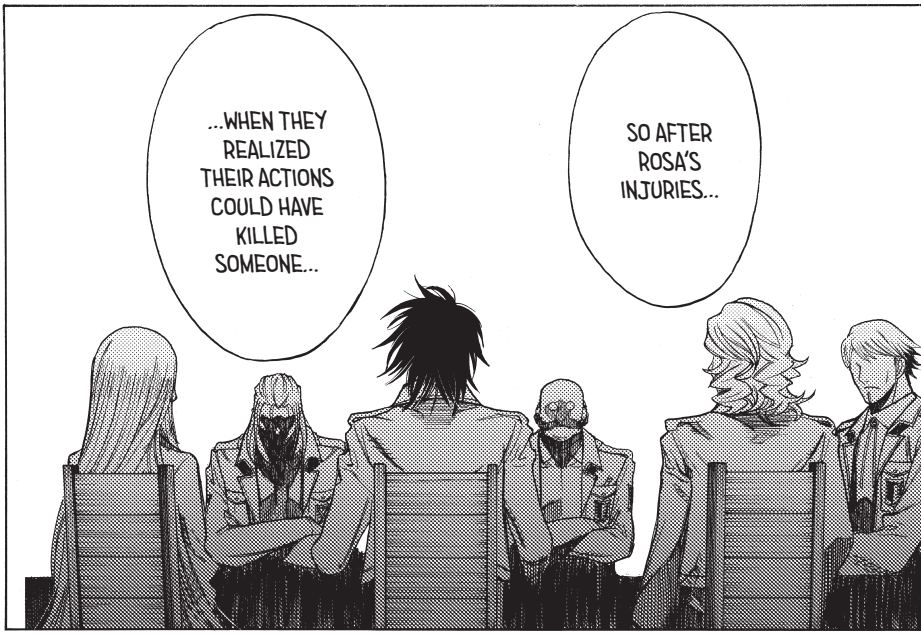

AH, I SEE.
SO THE CULPRITS USED A FALSE SUMMONS TO GET MISS SHARLE TO LEAVE, AND SLIPPED INTO THE ROOM THAT...
...ONLY TO WIND UP APPREHENDED BY MONITOR INOCENCIO.


BUT WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE IF THEY DIDN'T TAKE THE BAIT OF YOUR TRAP?
WE NEVER FOUND ANY CLUES THAT HINTED AT THE IDENTITY OF THE CULPRITS BEFOREHAND, DID WE?

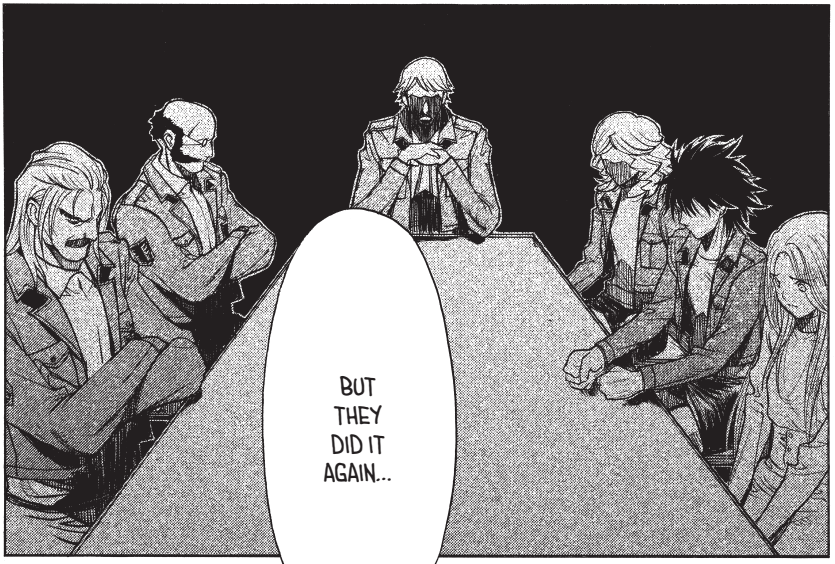

WELL...

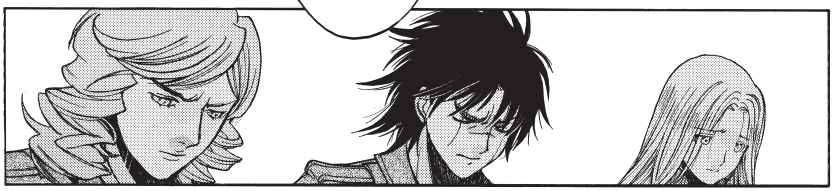
IF THEY DID NOT REPEAT THE CRIME, EVEN GIVEN AN INTENTIONAL OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO...
...I DID NOT PLAN TO PURSUE THEM ANY FURTHER.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN ?
IF THE CULPRIT WAS JUST A GENERAL TRAINEE WITHOUT NO KNOWLEDGE OF HOW TO MAKE OR USE THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT...
...THEN THEIR GOAL WOULD NOT BE TO KILL OR MAIM THE SPECIAL-CLASS TRAINEES LIKE ROSA, BUT SIMPLY TO PLAN A MEAN-SPIRITED PRANK.

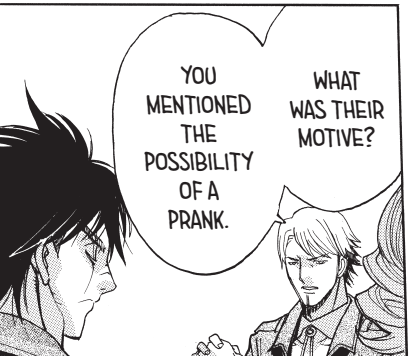


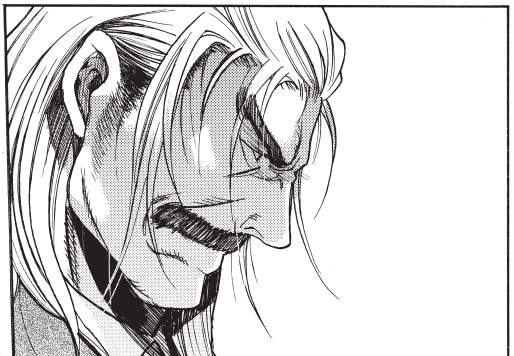

...WHEN THEY REALIZED THEIR ACTIONS COULD HAVE KILLED SOMEONE...
SO AFTER ROSA'S INJURIES...

...A DECENT PERSON WOULD REGRET IT, AND NEVER DO SUCH A THING AGAIN, I BELIEVED.

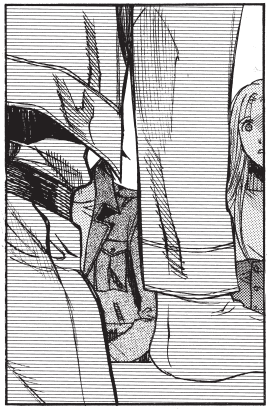

BUT THEY DID IT AGAIN...

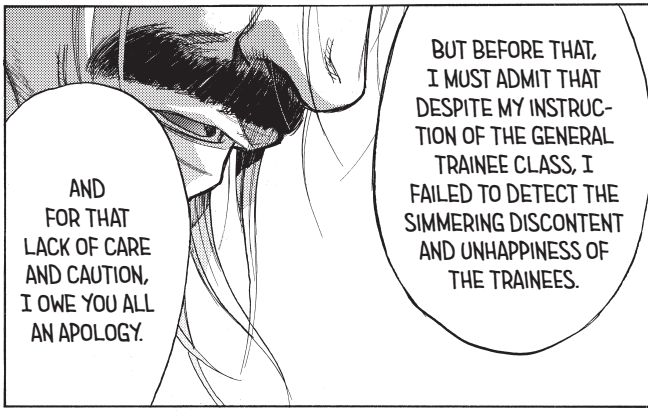


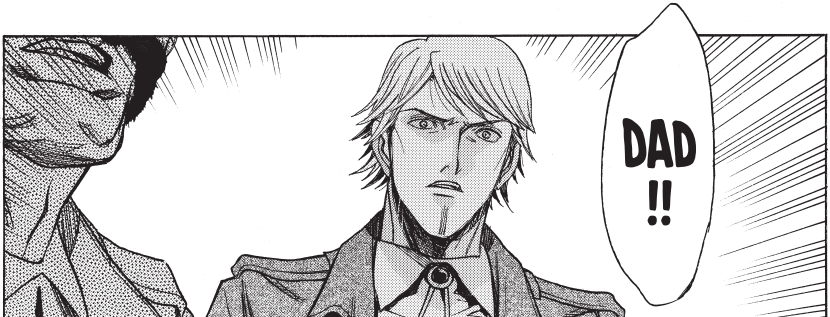

YOU MENTIONED THE POSSIBILITY OF A PRANK.
WHAT WAS THEIR MOTIVE?

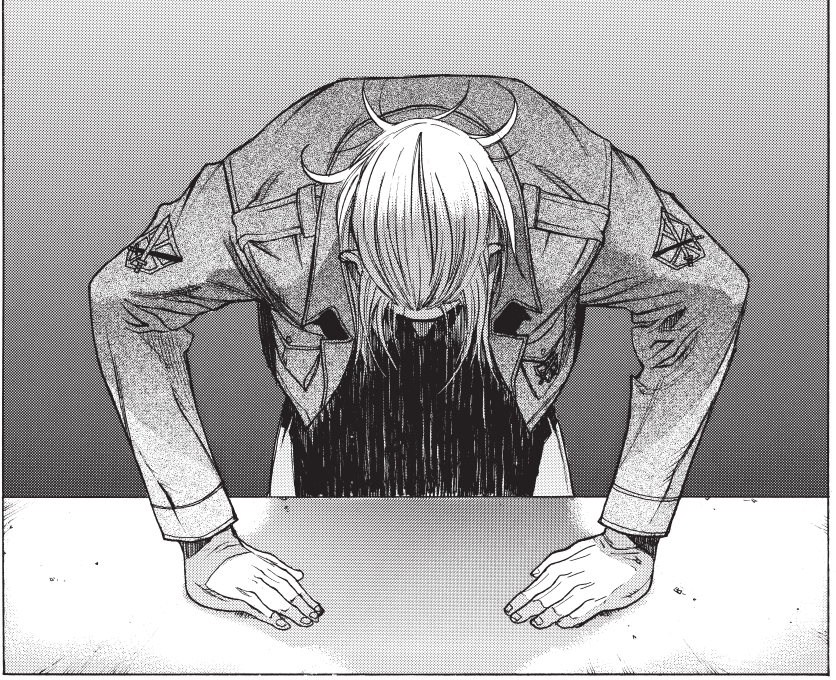


I WAS THE ONE WHO QUESTIONED THE FIVE WHO COMMITTED THE ACTS. I CAN TELL YOU.

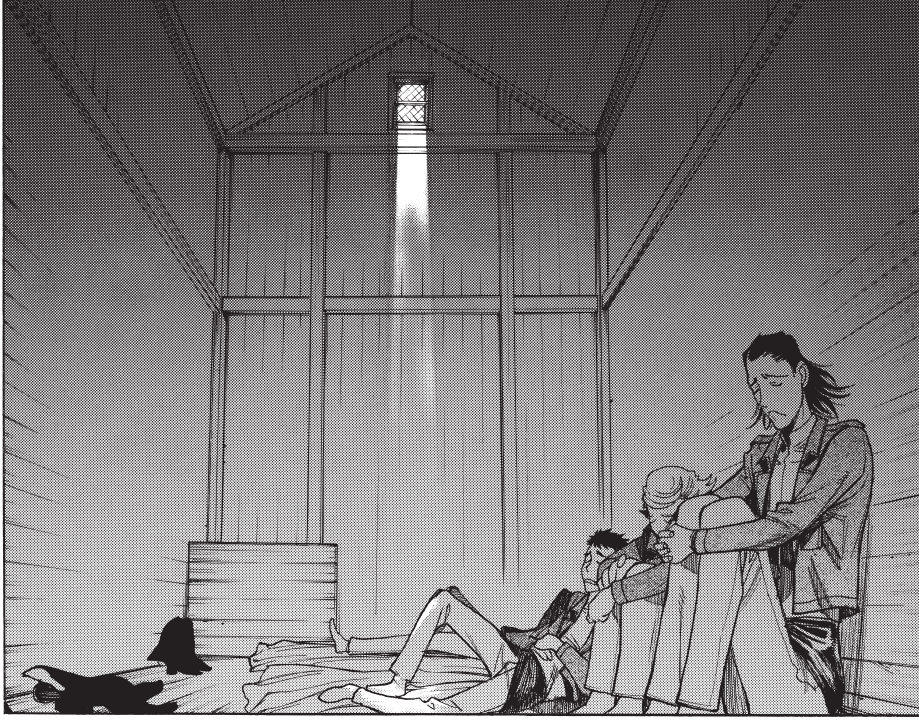



BUT BEFORE THAT, I MUST ADMIT THAT DESPITE MY INSTRUCTION OF THE GENERAL TRAINEE CLASS, I FAILED TO DETECT THE SIMMERING DISCONTENT AND UNHAPPINESS OF THE TRAINEES.
AND FOR THAT LACK OF CARE AND CAUTION, I OWE YOU ALL AN APOLOGY.


DAD !!



SURVEY CORPS TRAINING GROUNDS, BARRACKS GUARDHOUSE
AAAAH...
GRR
I CAN'T EVEN SLEEP, I'M SO HUNGRY.

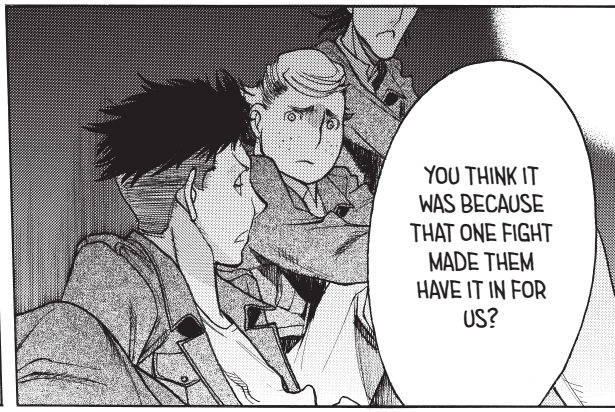


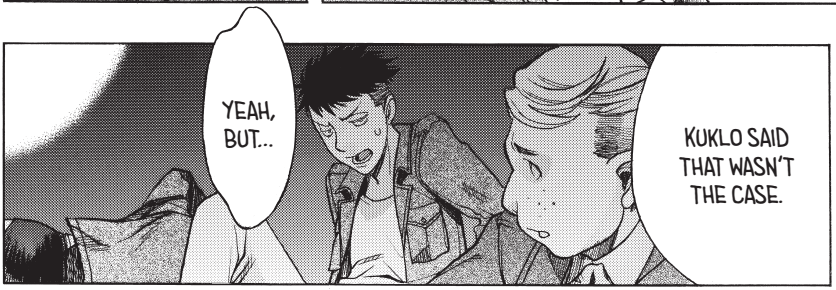
KUKLO COULD'VE AT LEAST SLIPPED US SOME FOOD.
DAMMIT ...
WHO ELSE WOULD GET LOCKED IN THE GUARDHOUSE TWICE IN SUCH A SHORT TIME BUT US?

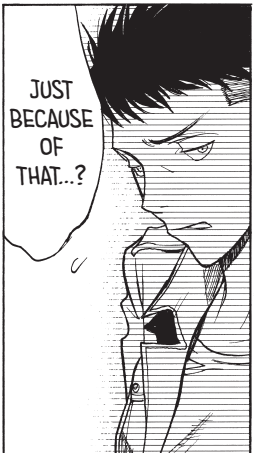
HMPH.
SAYS THE ONE GUY WHO'S BEEN IN HERE **THREE** TIMES. YOU'RE MAKING IT A HABIT.
ROLL

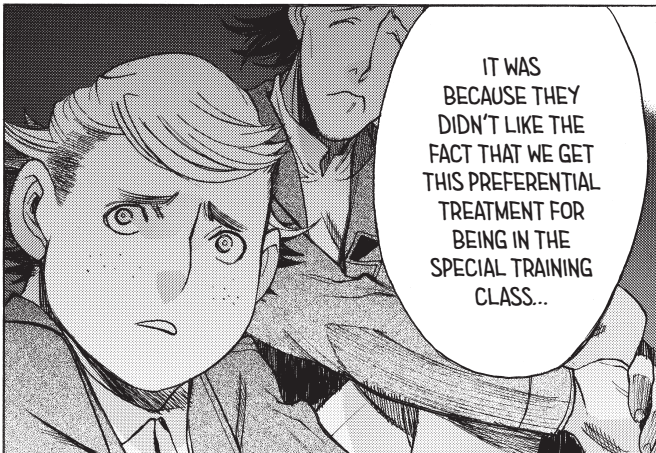
WE SHOULD CONSIDER OURSELVES LUCKY IT'S JUST ONE NIGHT IN HERE.
WE SKIPPED DINNER TO SNEAK INTO AN OFF-LIMITS AREA, EXPLICITLY AGAINST ORDERS.
HEY, IT'S THE PUNISH-MENT WE EARN-ED.

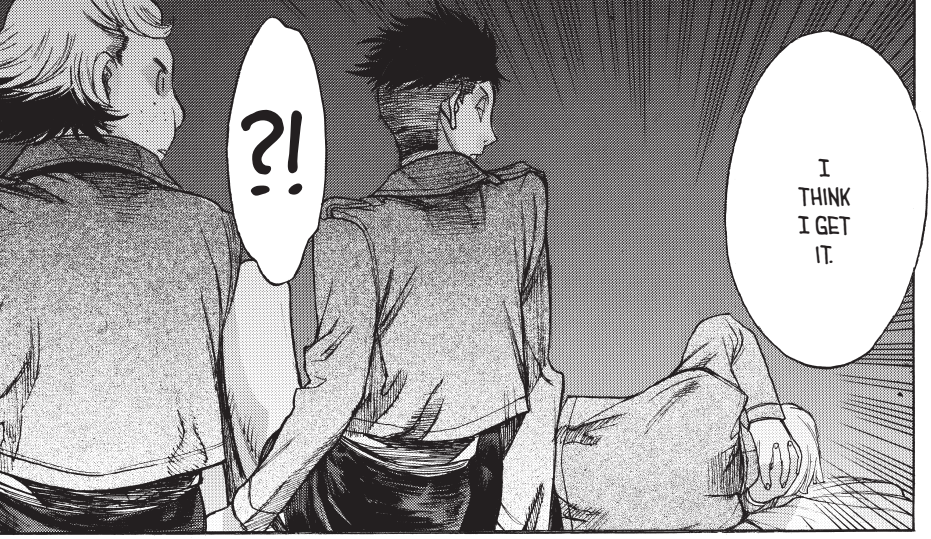
THERE, THERE.
INSTRUCTOR JORGE GUARANTEED IT WOULDN'T AFFECT OUR PLACEMENT WITHIN THE SURVEY CORPS.
WE SHOULD BE HAPPY IT ALL ENDED SAFELY.
"ENDED" ...HUH?


YOU THINK IT WAS BECAUSE THAT ONE FIGHT MADE THEM HAVE IT IN FOR US?

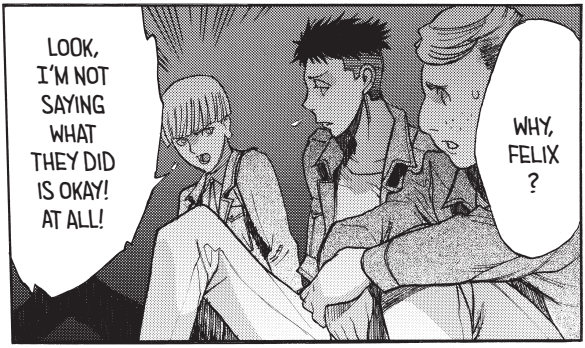

YEAH, BUT...
KUKLO SAID THAT WASN'T THE CASE.

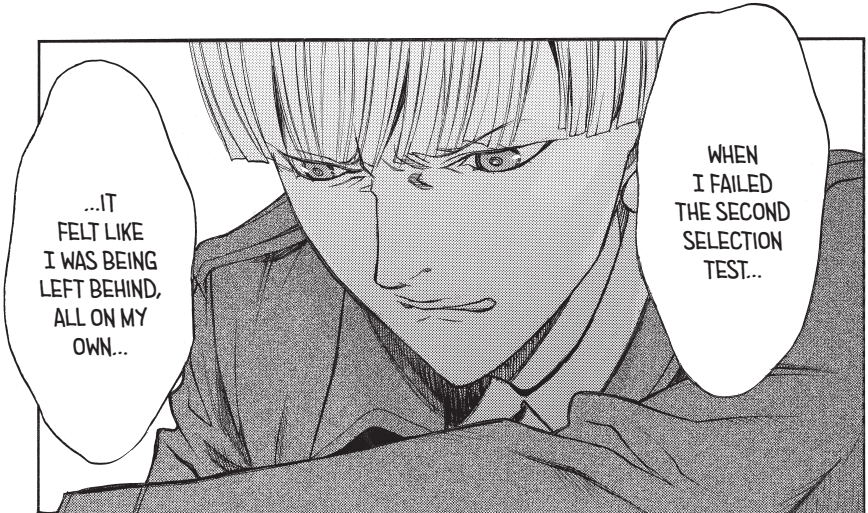

JUST BECAUSE OF THAT...?


IT WAS BECAUSE THEY DIDN'T LIKE THE FACT THAT WE GET THIS PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT FOR BEING IN THE SPECIAL TRAINING CLASS...


I THINK I GET IT.
?!

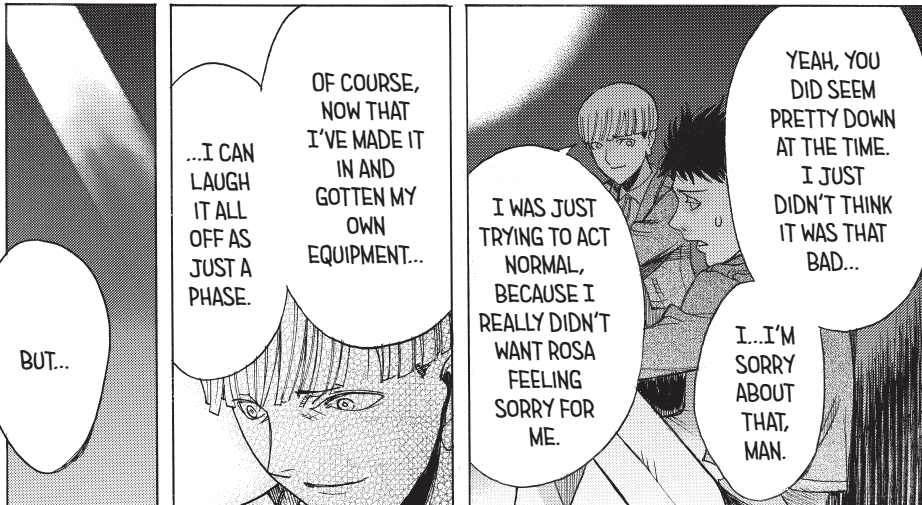
BUT...


WHY, FELIX ?
LOOK, I'M NOT SAYING WHAT THEY DID IS OKAY! AT ALL!

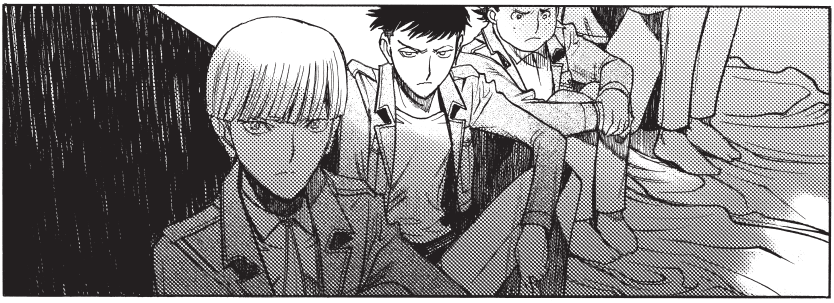

WHEN I FAILED THE SECOND SELECTION TEST...
...IT FELT LIKE I WAS BEING LEFT BEHIND, ALL ON MY OWN...

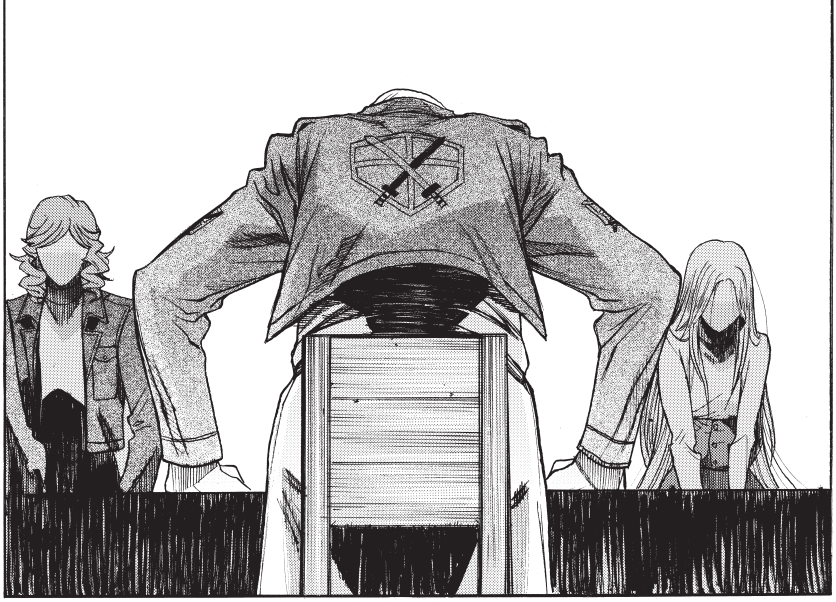
THE FIRST TEST WASN'T AS BAD, SINCE THERE WERE SO FEW OF US WHO PASSED...
BUT IN THE SECOND TEST, ROSA AND KAI PASSED, OUT OF OUR GROUP...

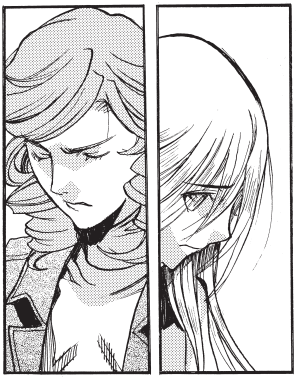
I WAS THE ONLY ONE LEFT BEHIND. I THINK I MUST'VE REALLY BEEN PANICKING ON THE INSIDE.

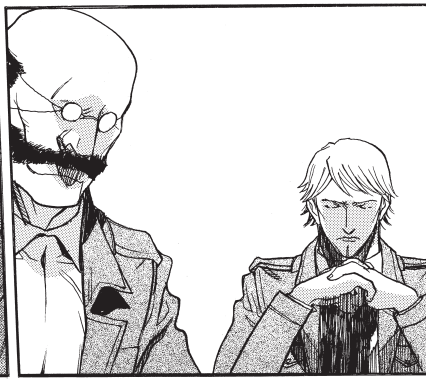

BUT...
...I CAN LAUGH IT ALL OFF AS JUST A PHASE.
OF COURSE, NOW THAT I'VE MADE IT IN AND GOTTEN MY OWN EQUIPMENT...
I WAS JUST TRYING TO ACT NORMAL, BECAUSE I REALLY DIDN'T WANT ROSA FEELING SORRY FOR ME.
YEAH, YOU DID SEEM PRETTY DOWN AT THE TIME. I JUST DIDN'T THINK IT WAS THAT BAD...
I...I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT, MAN.

FOR THOSE OTHER GUYS...

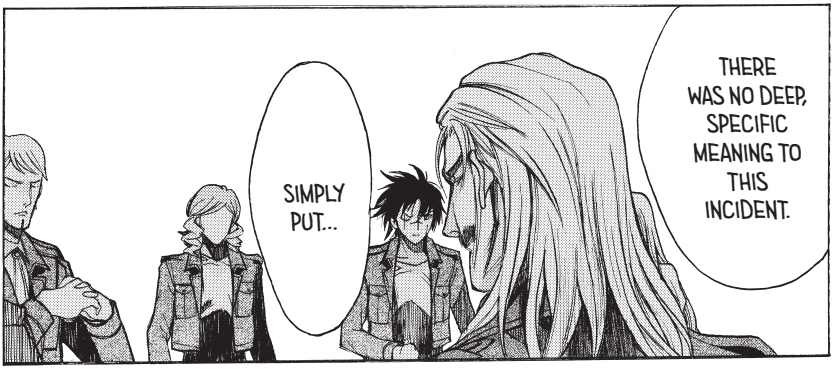


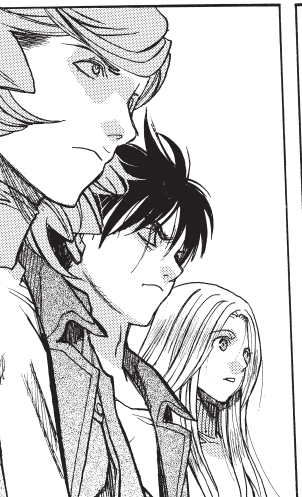




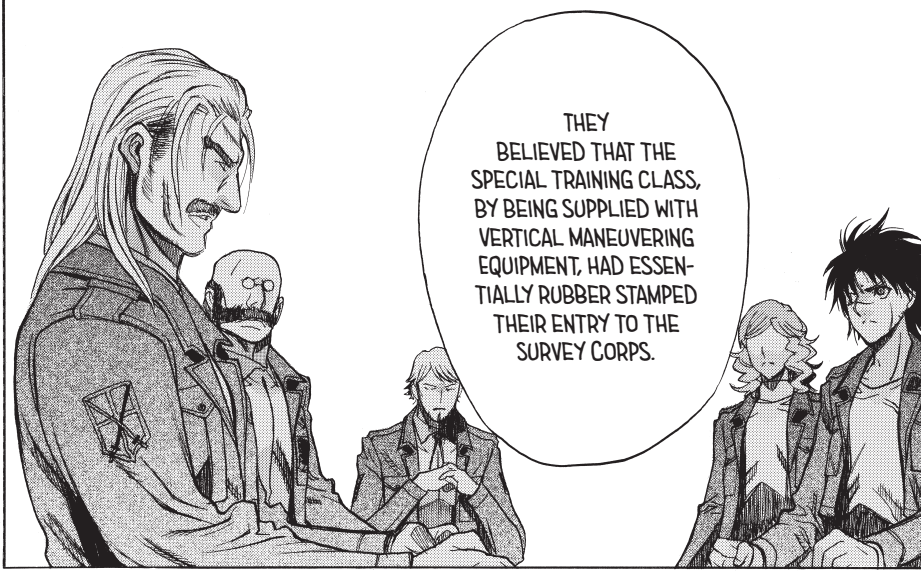


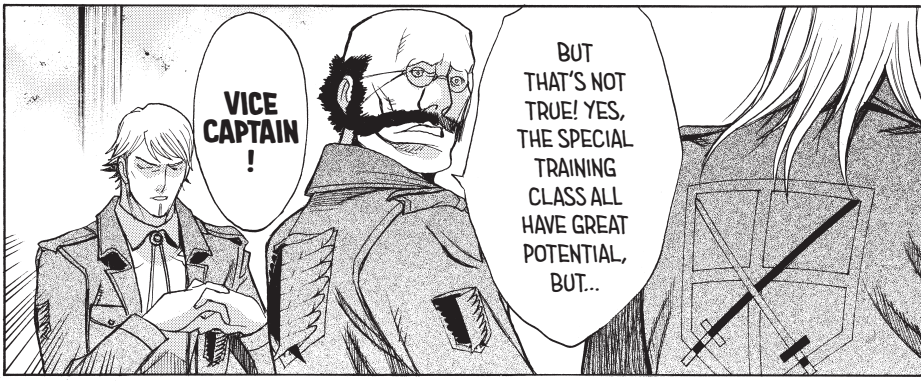
CREAK...
PLEASE EXPLAIN...
... INSTRUC-TOR JORGE.


THERE WAS NO DEEP, SPECIFIC MEANING TO THIS INCIDENT.
SIMPLY PUT...



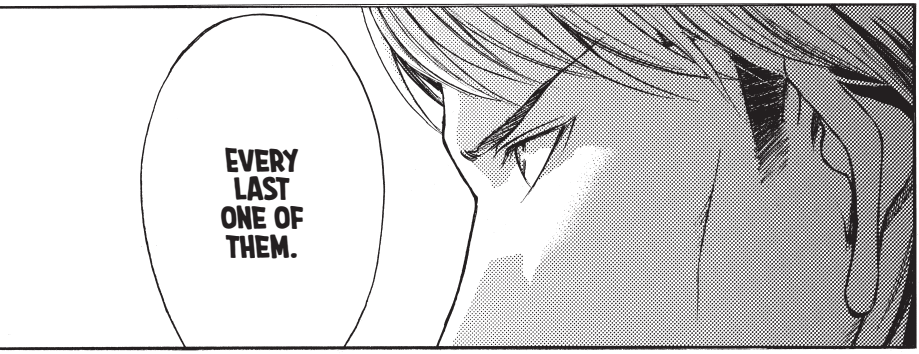
IT WAS AN ACT OF JEALOUSY.

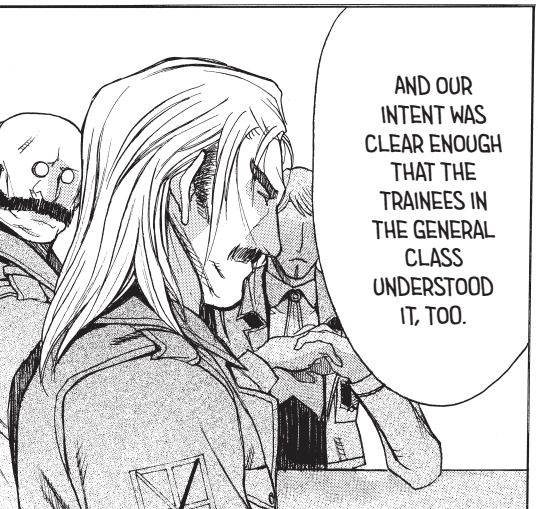

THEY BELIEVED THAT THE SPECIAL TRAINING CLASS, BY BEING SUPPLIED WITH VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT, HAD ESSENTIALLY RUBBER STAMPED THEIR ENTRY TO THE SURVEY CORPS.

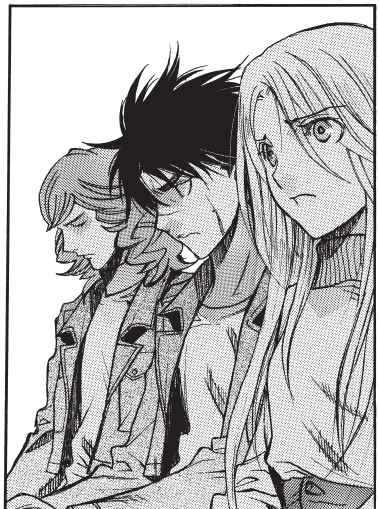

VICE CAPTAIN!
BUT THAT'S NOT TRUE! YES, THE SPECIAL TRAINING CLASS ALL HAVE GREAT POTENTIAL, BUT...

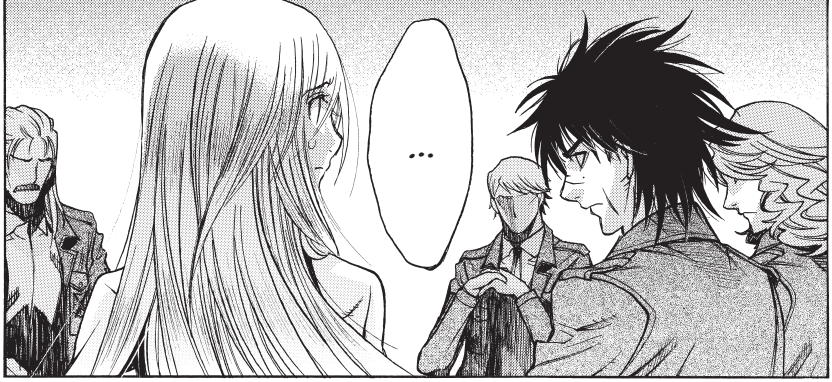
LET US DISPENSE WITH THE EQUIVOCATION.

BUT GIVEN THAT WE ARE TRAINING THEM WITH THIS NEW EQUIPMENT, WE **MUST** BRING ALL OF THE SPECIAL TRAINING CLASS INTO THE FOLD OF THE CORPS.
I'VE AVOIDED STATING IT OUTRIGHT, BECAUSE THE FATE OF THE SURVEY CORPS ITSELF DEPENDS ON THE OUTCOME OF THIS EXPEDITION.

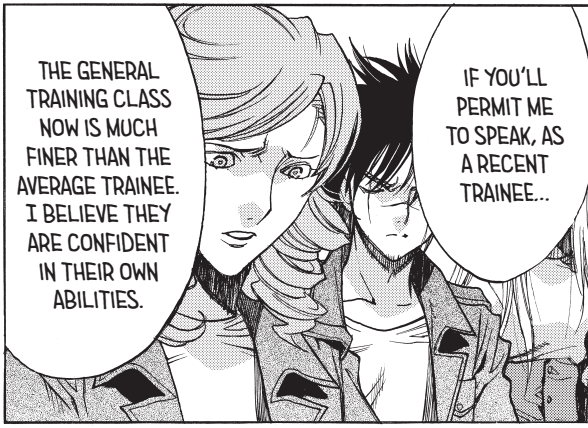

EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM.

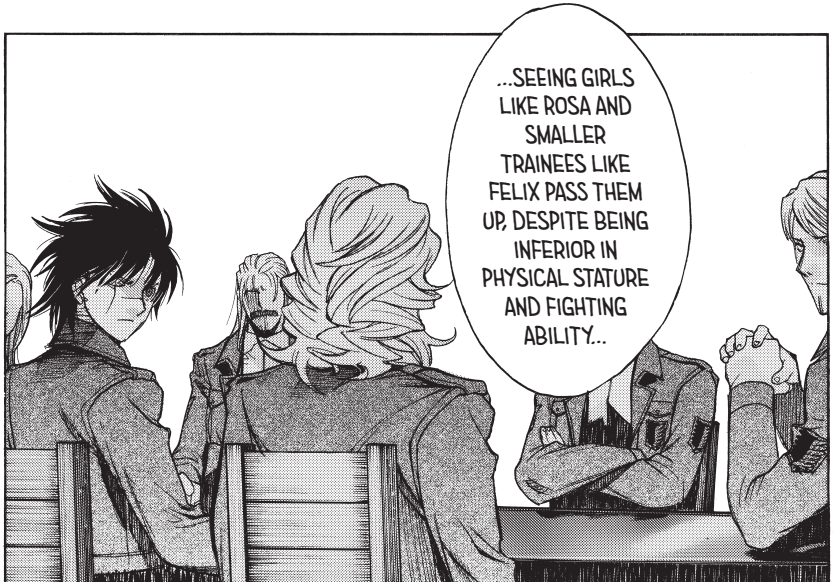

AND OUR INTENT WAS CLEAR ENOUGH THAT THE TRAINEES IN THE GENERAL CLASS UNDERSTOOD IT, TOO.

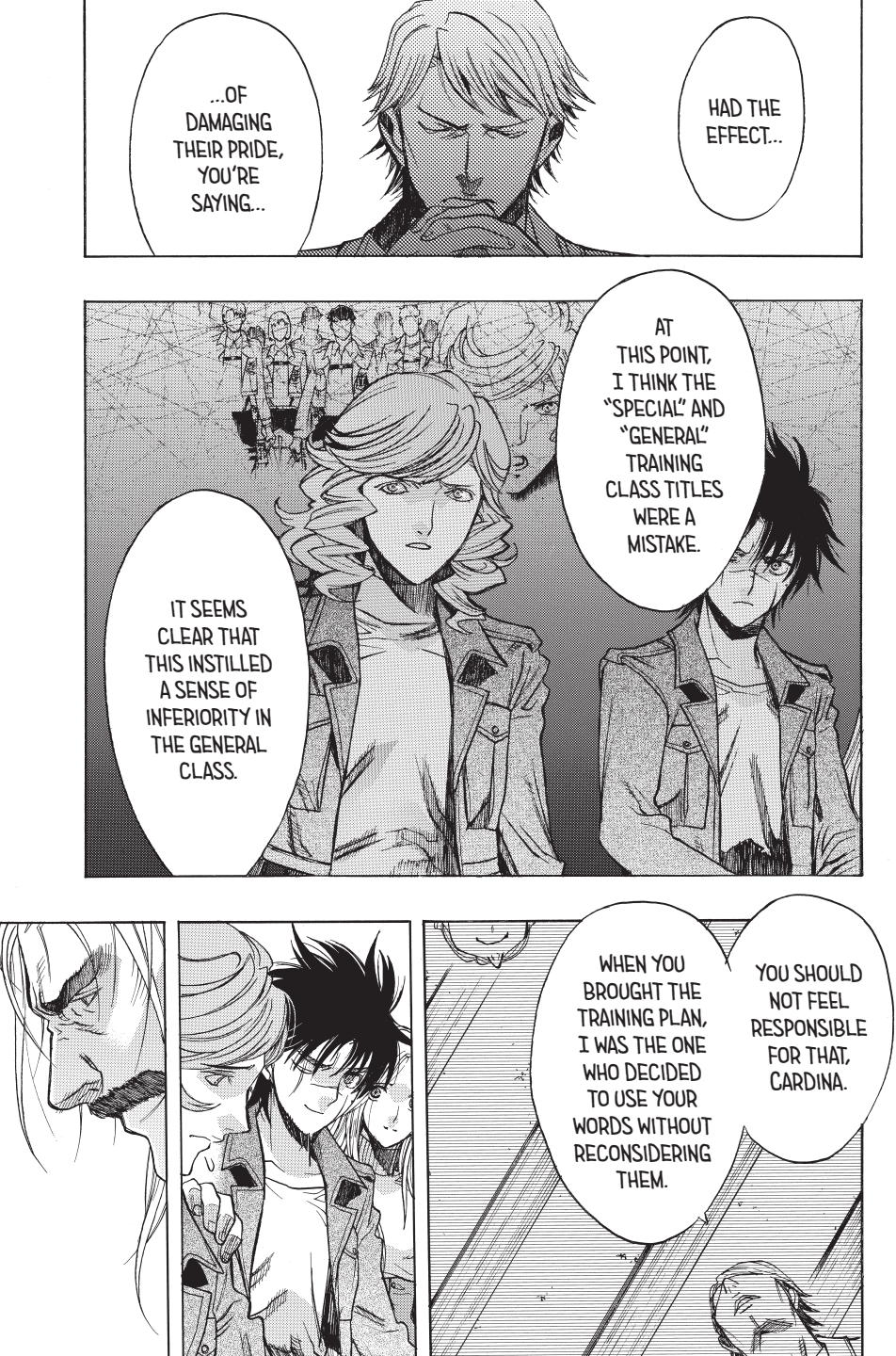


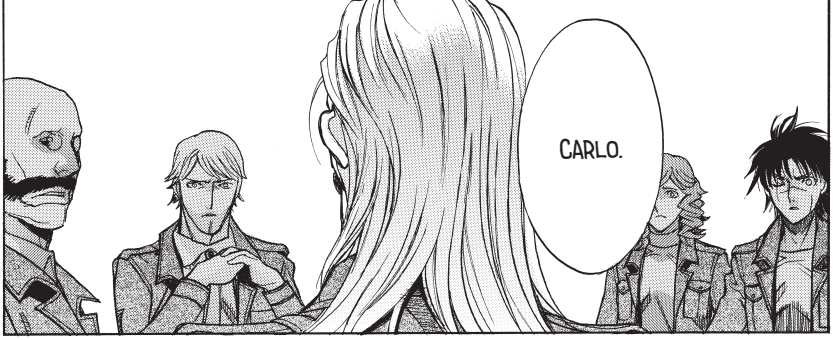

...

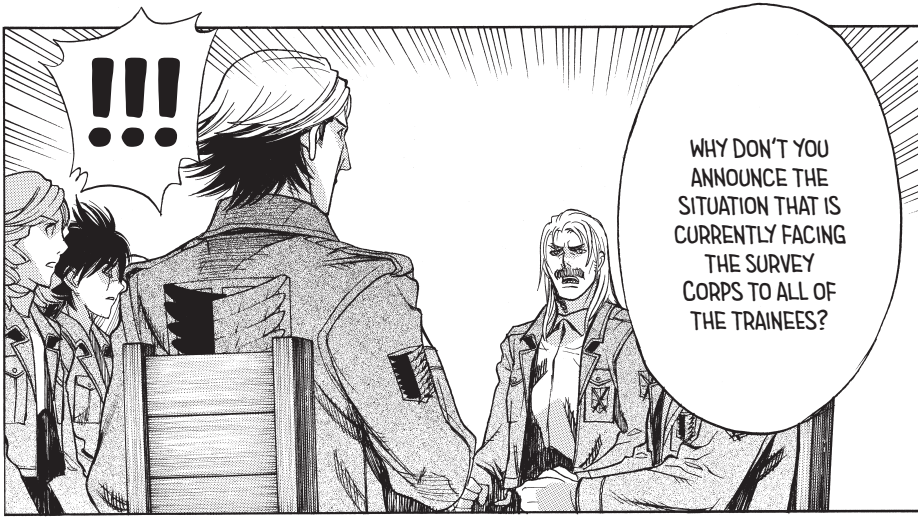
AND THERE-FORE...

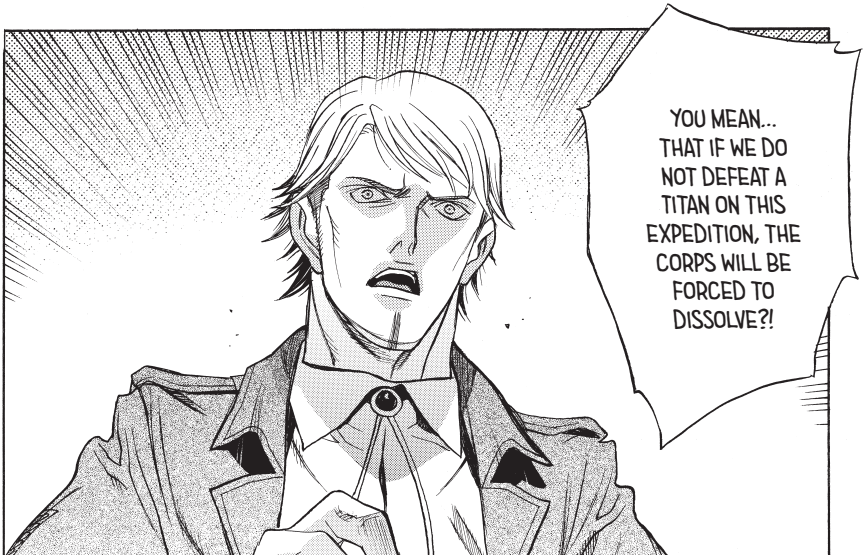

THE GENERAL TRAINING CLASS NOW IS MUCH FINER THAN THE AVERAGE TRAINEE. I BELIEVE THEY ARE CONFIDENT IN THEIR OWN ABILITIES.
IF YOU'LL PERMIT ME TO SPEAK, AS A RECENT TRAINEE...


...SEEING GIRLS LIKE ROSA AND SMALLER TRAINEES LIKE FELIX PASS THEM UP, DESPITE BEING INFERIOR IN PHYSICAL STATURE AND FIGHTING ABILITY...

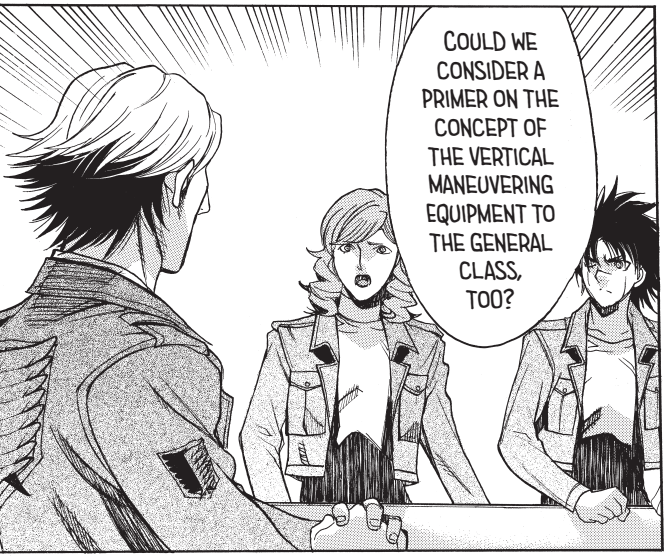

...OF DAMAGING THEIR PRIDE, YOU'RE SAYING...
HAD THE EFFECT...
AT THIS POINT, I THINK THE "SPECIAL" AND "GENERAL" TRAINING CLASS TITLES WERE A MISTAKE.
IT SEEMS CLEAR THAT THIS INSTILLED A SENSE OF INFERIORITY IN THE GENERAL CLASS.
WHEN YOU BROUGHT THE TRAINING PLAN, I WAS THE ONE WHO DECIDED TO USE YOUR WORDS WITHOUT RECONSIDERING THEM.
YOU SHOULD NOT FEEL RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT, CARDINA.


CARLO.

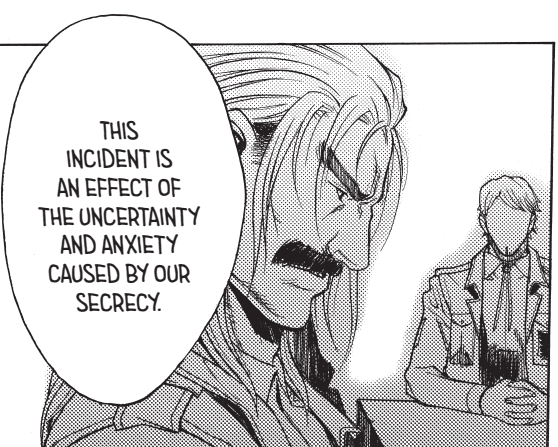

!!!
WHY DON'T YOU ANNOUNCE THE SITUATION THAT IS CURRENTLY FACING THE SURVEY CORPS TO ALL OF THE TRAINEES?

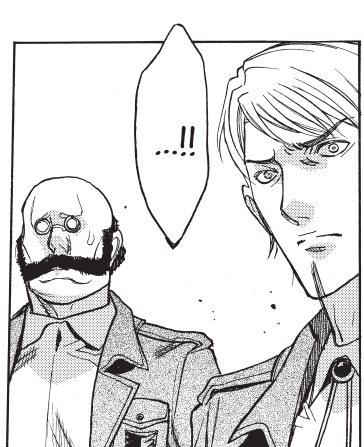

YOU MEAN... THAT IF WE DO NOT DEFEAT A TITAN ON THIS EXPEDITION, THE CORPS WILL BE FORCED TO DISSOLVE?!

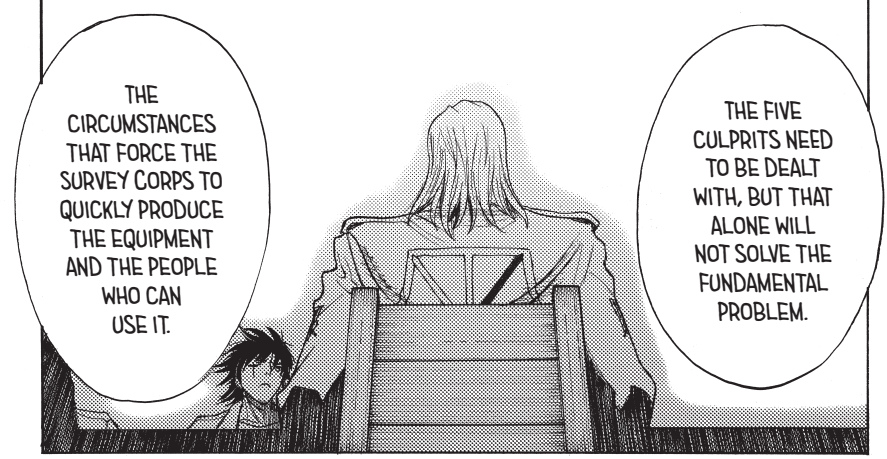
...

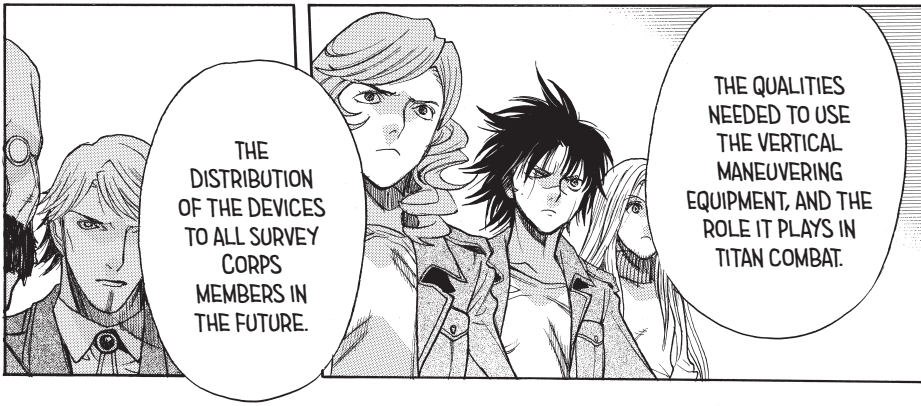

COULD WE CONSIDER A PRIMER ON THE CONCEPT OF THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT TO THE GENERAL CLASS, TOO?

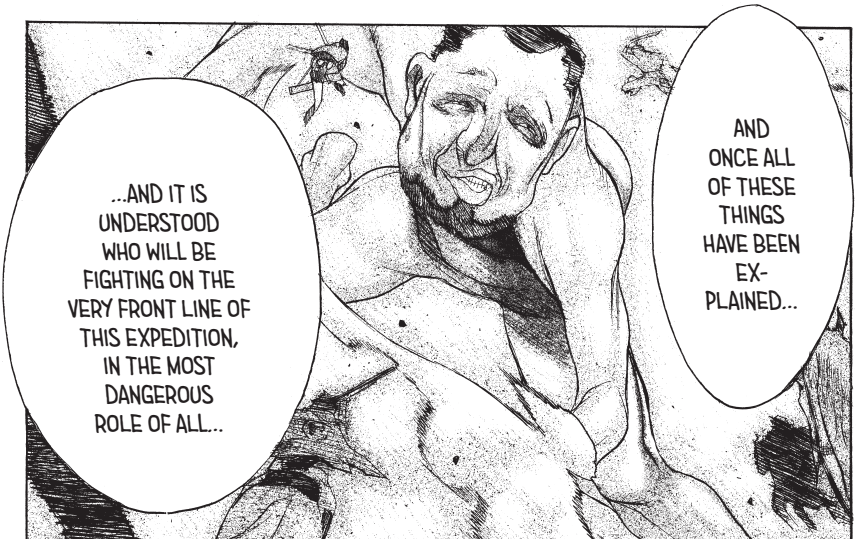
PARDON ME...


THIS INCIDENT IS AN EFFECT OF THE UNCERTAINTY AND ANXIETY CAUSED BY OUR SECRECY.

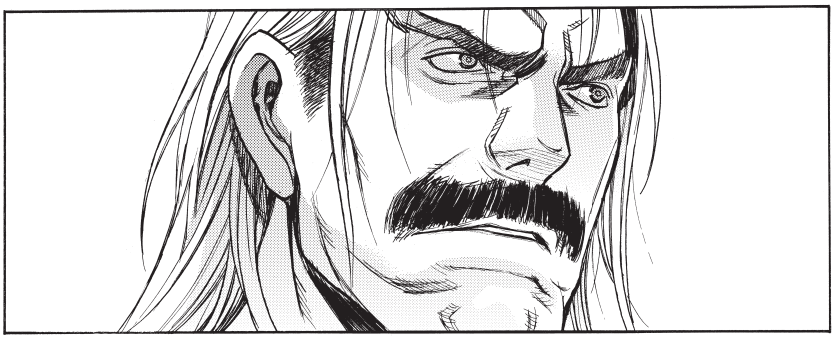

...!!

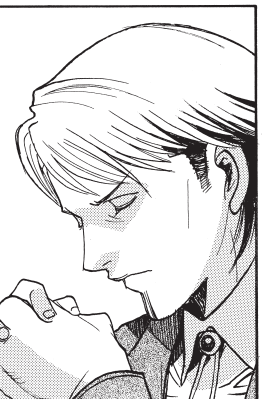

THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT FORCE THE SURVEY CORPS TO QUICKLY PRODUCE THE EQUIPMENT AND THE PEOPLE WHO CAN USE IT.
THE FIVE CULPRITS NEED TO BE DEALT WITH, BUT THAT ALONE WILL NOT SOLVE THE FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM.

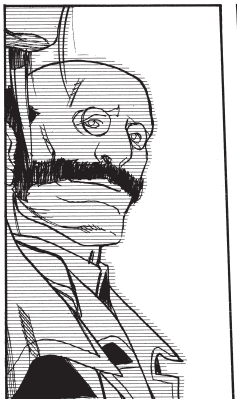

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE DEVICES TO ALL SURVEY CORPS MEMBERS IN THE FUTURE.
THE QUALITIES NEEDED TO USE THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT, AND THE ROLE IT PLAYS IN TITAN COMBAT.

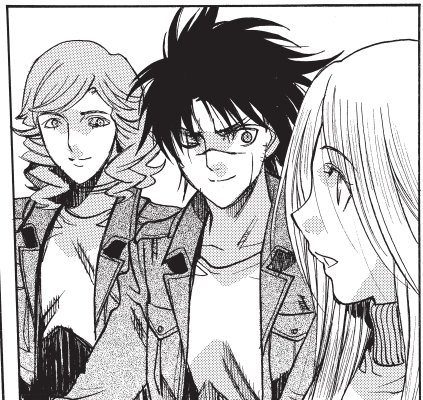

...AND IT IS UNDERSTOOD WHO WILL BE FIGHTING ON THE VERY FRONT LINE OF THIS EXPEDITION, IN THE MOST DANGEROUS ROLE OF ALL...
AND ONCE ALL OF THESE THINGS HAVE BEEN EX-PLAINED...

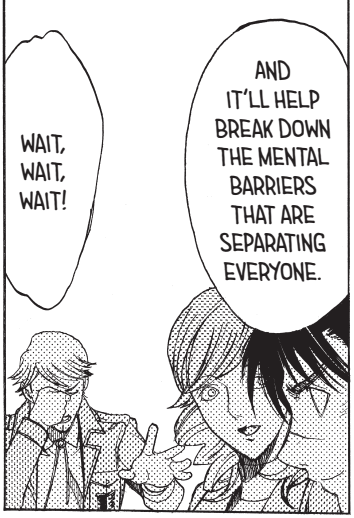
...WE OUGHT TO ASK THEM TO HELP THE SPECIAL TRAINING CLASS.



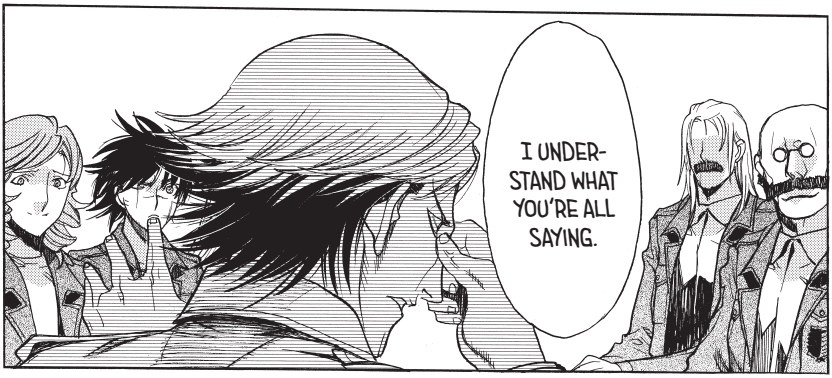


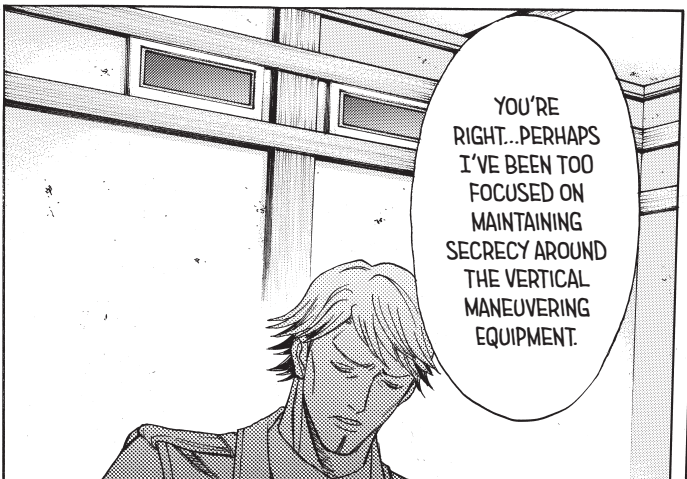




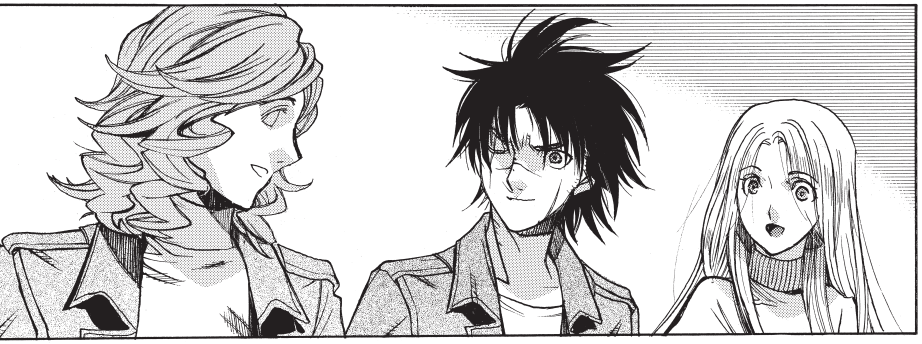

WAIT, WAIT, WAIT!
AND IT'LL HELP BREAK DOWN THE MENTAL BARRIERS THAT ARE SEPARATING EVERYONE.

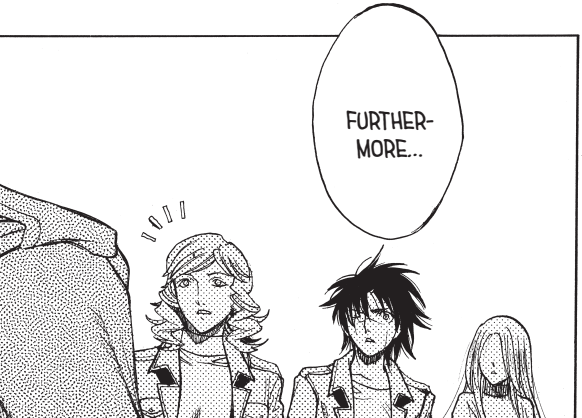
THAT'S A GOOD IDEA!
I'D LIKE TO DO A JOINT TACTICAL TRAINING SESSION, SIMULATING A TITAN BATTLE WITH BOTH CLASSES.

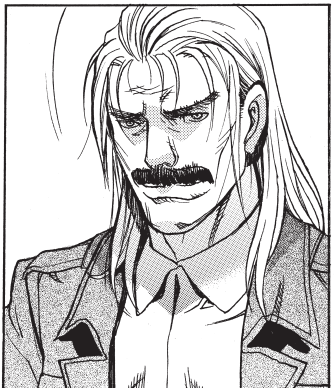

I UNDER-STAND WHAT YOU'RE ALL SAYING.


YOU'RE RIGHT...PERHAPS I'VE BEEN TOO FOCUSED ON MAINTAINING SECRECY AROUND THE VERTICAL MANEUVERING EQUIPMENT.

WHEN ANGEL RETURNS TOMORROW, WE'LL DISCUSS THE MATTER, AND CONSIDER REVEALING EVERYTHING PUBLICLY.

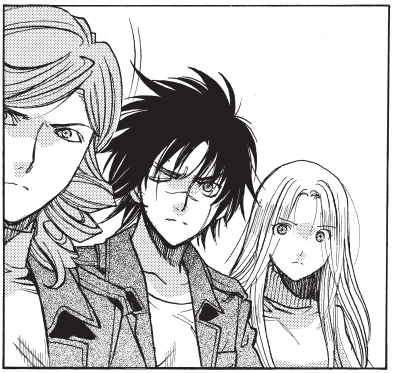


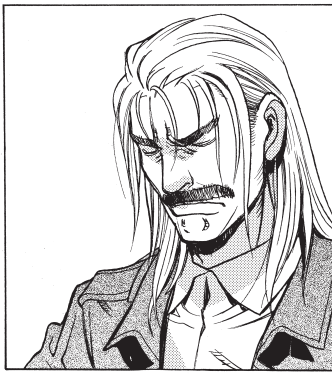




GIVEN THE MINOR DAMAGES AND TRUE INTENTIONS OF THE FIVE WHO CAUSED THIS INCIDENT, THEY WILL NOT BE HANDED OVER TO THE MILITARY POLICE.

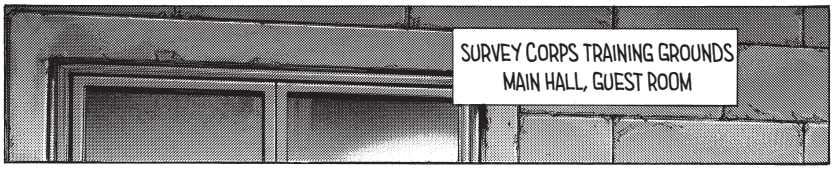
BUT IN LIGHT OF THEIR ATTEMPT AT A REPEAT OFFENSE, SUCCESSFUL OR NOT, THEIR APPLICATIONS TO THE SURVEY CORPS ARE REJECTED. THEY WILL BE RETURNED TO THEIR ACADEMY WITH A RECOMMENDATION OF REHABILITATION!

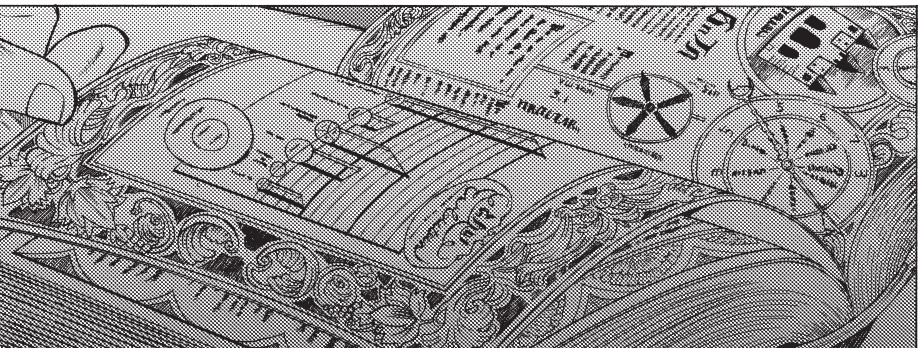


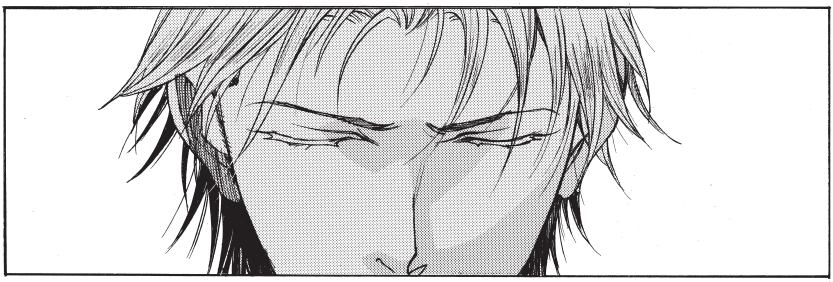


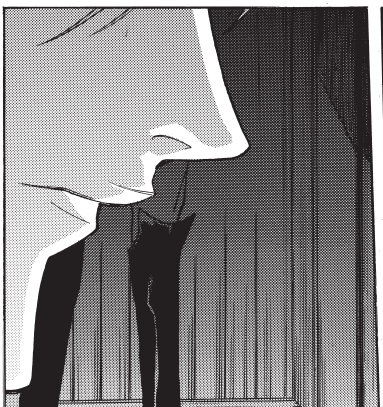
THAT IS ALL.

MEETING AD-JOURNED!

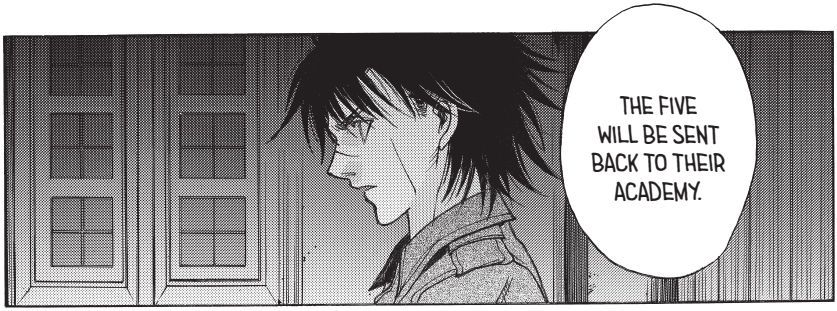

SURVEY CORPS TRAINING GROUNDS
MAIN HALL, GUEST ROOM

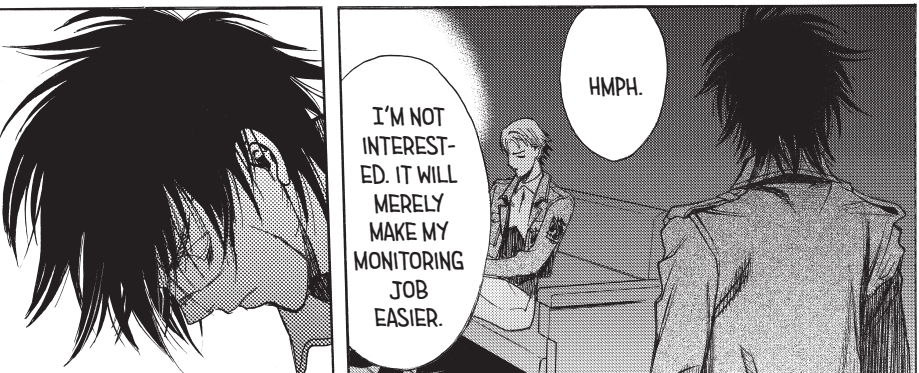


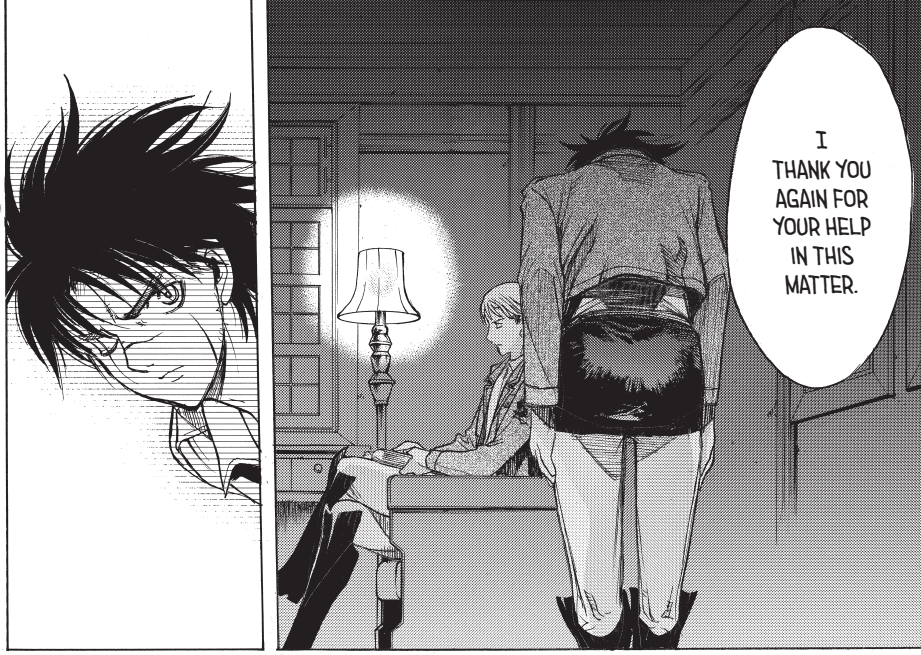


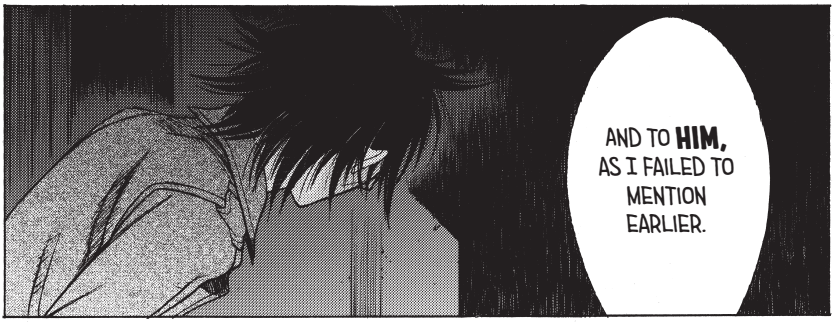


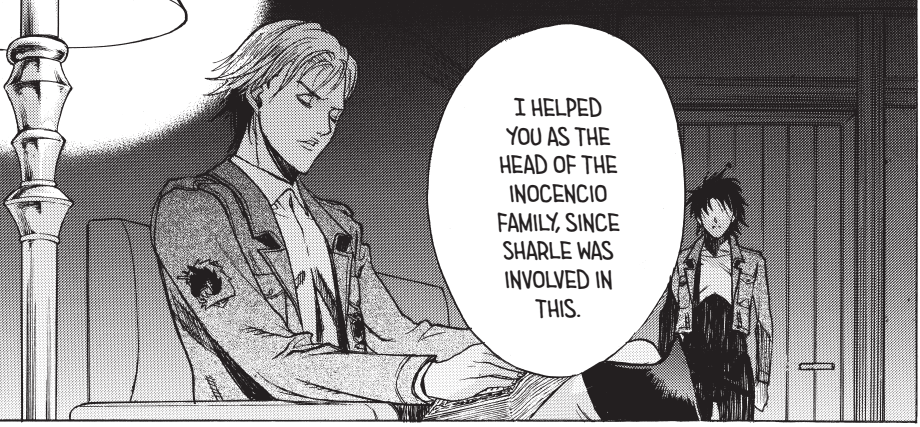
DID YOU WANT SOMETHING ELSE?

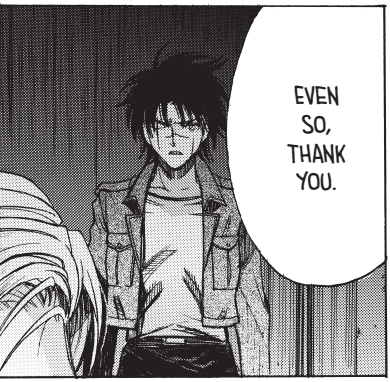

THE FIVE WILL BE SENT BACK TO THEIR ACADEMY.


HMPH.
I'M NOT INTEREST-ED. IT WILL MERELY MAKE MY MONITORING JOB EASIER.

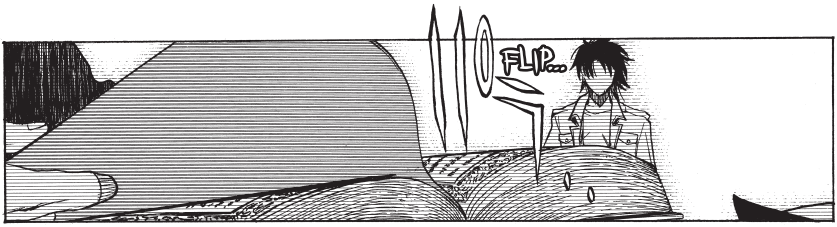

I THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR HELP IN THIS MATTER.

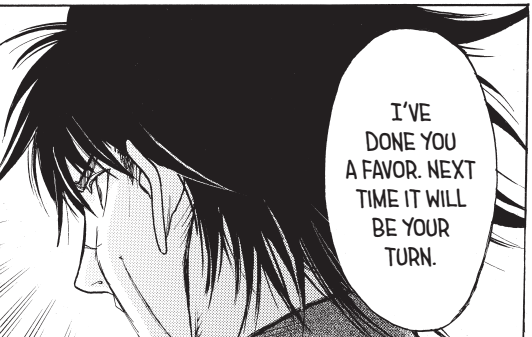

AND TO **HIM,** AS I FAILED TO MENTION EARLIER.


I HELPED YOU AS THE HEAD OF THE INOCENCIO FAMILY, SINCE SHARLE WAS INVOLVED IN THIS.

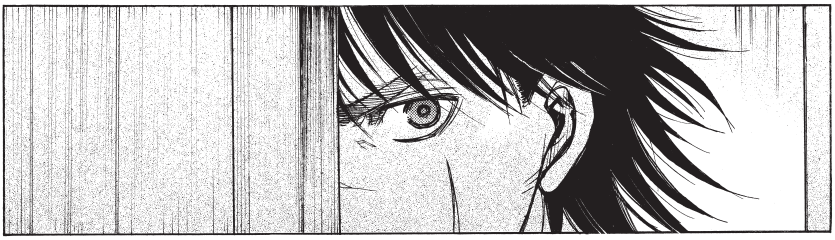

EVEN SO, THANK YOU.

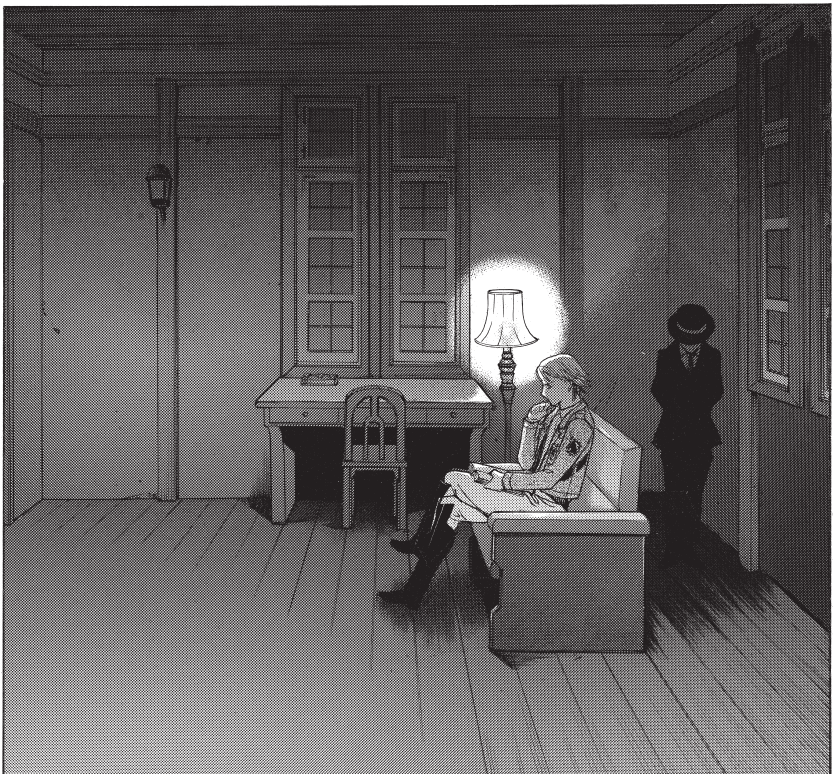
IT WILL NOT HAPPEN AGAIN.


FLIP...

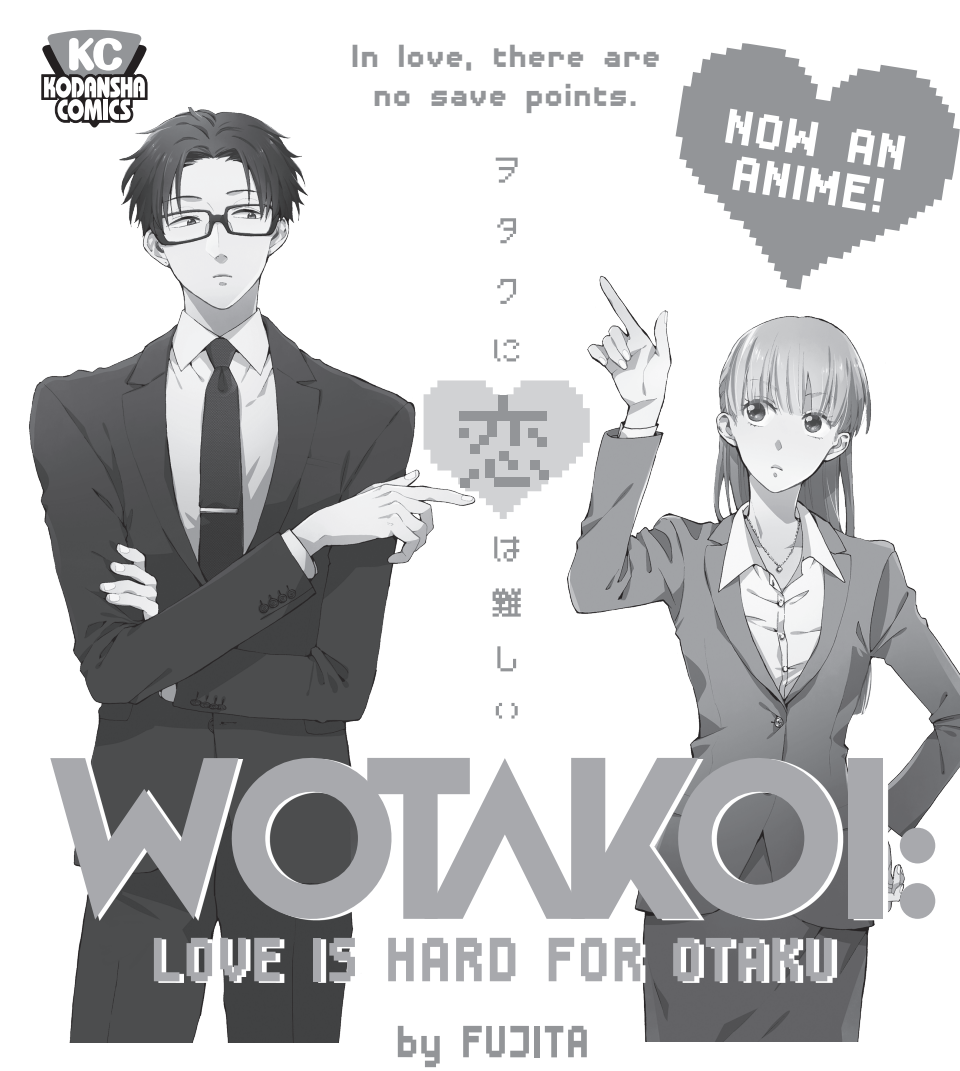

I'VE DONE YOU A FAVOR. NEXT TIME IT WILL BE YOUR TURN.

CREAK





TO BE CONTINUED



Narumi has had it rough: Every boyfriend she's had dumped her once they found out she was an otaku, so she's gone to great lengths to hide it. At her new job, she bumps into Hirotaka, her childhood friend and fellow otaku. When Hirotaka almost gets her secret outed at work, she comes up with a plan to keep him quiet. But he comes up with a counter-proposal: Why doesn't she just date him instead?

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A new series from Yoshitoki Oima, creator of The New York Times bestselling manga and Eisner Award nominee *A Silent Voice*!

An intimate, emotional drama and an epic story spanning time and space...

TO YOUR ETERNITY

An orb was cast unto the earth. After metamorphosing into a wolf, It joins a boy on his bleak journey to find his tribe. Ever learning, It transcends death, even when those around It cannot…

KC KODANSHA COMICS

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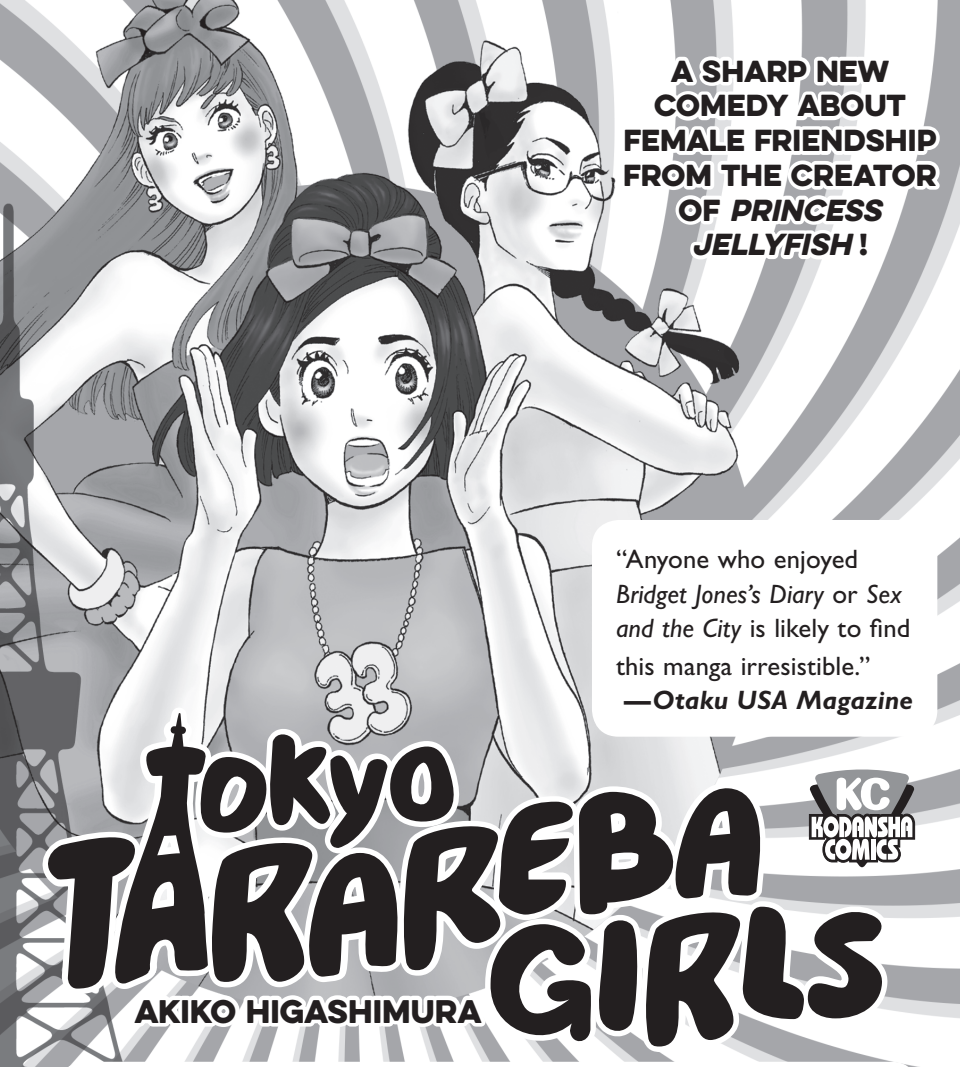

Rinko has done everything she can to make it as a screenwriter. So at 33, she can't help but lament over the fact that her career's plateaued, she's still painfully single, and spends most of her nights drinking with her two best friends. One night, drunk and delusional, Rinko swears to get married by the time the Tokyo Olympics roll around in 2020. But finding a man—or love—may be a cutthroat, dirty job for a romantic at heart!

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Having lost his wife, high school teacher Kōhei Inuzuka is doing his best to raise his young daughter Tsumugi as a single father. He's pretty bad at cooking and doesn't have a huge appetite to begin with, but chance brings his little family together with one of his students, the lonely Kotori. The three of them are anything but comfortable in the kitchen, but the healing power of home cooking might just work on their grieving hearts.

"This season's number-one feel-good anime!" —Anime News Network

"A beautifully-drawn story about comfort food and family and grief. Recommended." —Otaku USA Magazine

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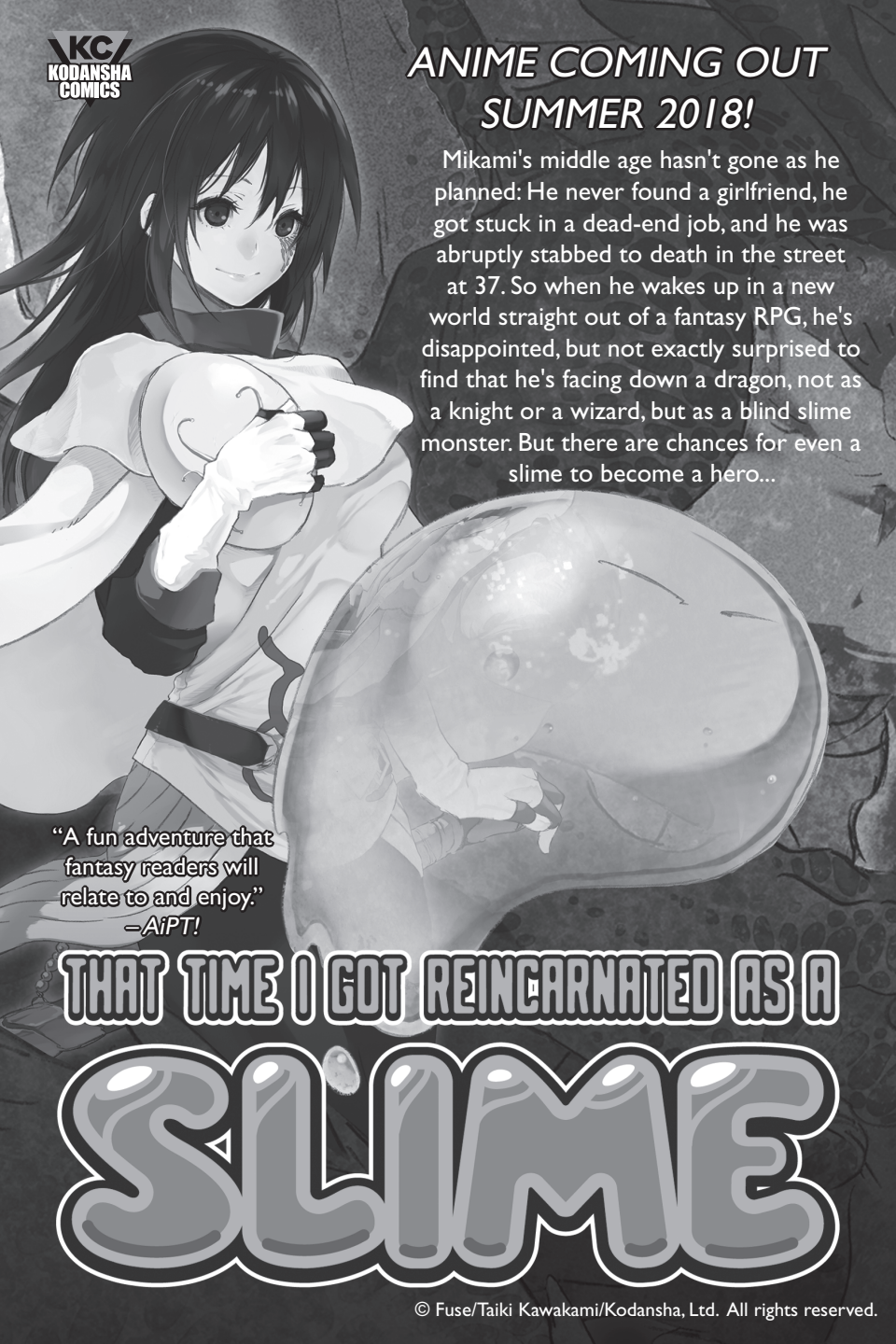
KC
KODANSHA COMICS
ANIME COMING OUT SUMMER 2018!
Mikami's middle age hasn't gone as he planned: He never found a girlfriend, he got stuck in a dead-end job, and he was abruptly stabbed to death in the street at 37. So when he wakes up in a new world straight out of a fantasy RPG, he's disappointed, but not exactly surprised to find that he's facing down a dragon, not as a knight or a wizard, but as a blind slime monster. But there are chances for even a slime to become a hero...
"A fun adventure that fantasy readers will relate to and enjoy."
–AiPT!
THAT TIME I GOT REINCARNATED AS A
SLIME
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Pretty Guardian

Sailor Moon

Eternal Edition

The sailor-suited guardians return in this definitive edition of the greatest magical girl manga of all time! Featuring all-new cover illustrations by creator Naoko Takeuchi, a glittering holographic coating, an extra-large size, premium paper, French flaps, and a newly-revised translation!

Teenager Usagi is not the best athlete, she's never gotten good grades, and, well, she's a bit of a crybaby. But when she meets a talking cat, she begins a journey that will teach her she has a well of great strength just beneath the surface, and the heart to inspire and stand up for her friends as Sailor Moon! Experience the *Sailor Moon* manga as never before in these extra-long editions!

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"If you like space cowboys and pirates or simply want to get lost in a strange dreamlike story, Kodansha's beautiful hardcover is worth checking out."
- Anime News Network

"It's not so much a manga as it is a song. But you'll want to listen to it again and again."
- A Case for Suitable Treatment

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"*Parasyte* fans should get a kick out of the chance to revisit Iwaaki's weird, violent, strangely affecting universe. Recommended." ·Otaku USA Magazine

"A great anthology containing an excellent variety of genres and styles." ·Manga Bookshelf

Based on the critically acclaimed classic horror manga

The first new *Parasyte* manga in over 20 years!

NEO PARASYTE

BY ASUMIKO NAKAMURA, EMA TOYAMA, MIKI RINNO, LALAKO KOJIMA, KAORI YUKI, BANKO KUZE, YUUKI OBATA, KASHIO, YUI KUROE, ASIA WATANABE, MIKIMAKI, HIKARU SURUGA, HAJIME SHINJO, RENJURO KINDAICHI, AND YURI NARUSHIMA

A collection of chilling new *Parasyte* stories from Japan's top shojo artists!

Parasites: shape-shifting aliens whose only purpose is to assimilate with and consume the human race... but do these monsters have a different side? A parasite becomes a prince to save his romance-obsessed female host from a dangerous stalker. Another hosts a cooking show, in which the real monsters are revealed. These and 13 more stories, from some of the greatest shojo manga artists alive today, together make up a chilling, funny, and entertaining tribute to one of manga's horror classics!

© Hitoshi Iwaaki, Asumiko Nakamura, Ema Toyama, Miki Rinno, Lalako Kojima, Kaori Yuki, Banko Kuze, Yuuki Obata, Kashio, Yui Kuroe, Asia Watanabe, Mikimaki, Hikaru Suruga, Hajime Shinjo, Renjuro Kindaichi, Yuri Narushima/Kodansha Ltd. All rights reserved.

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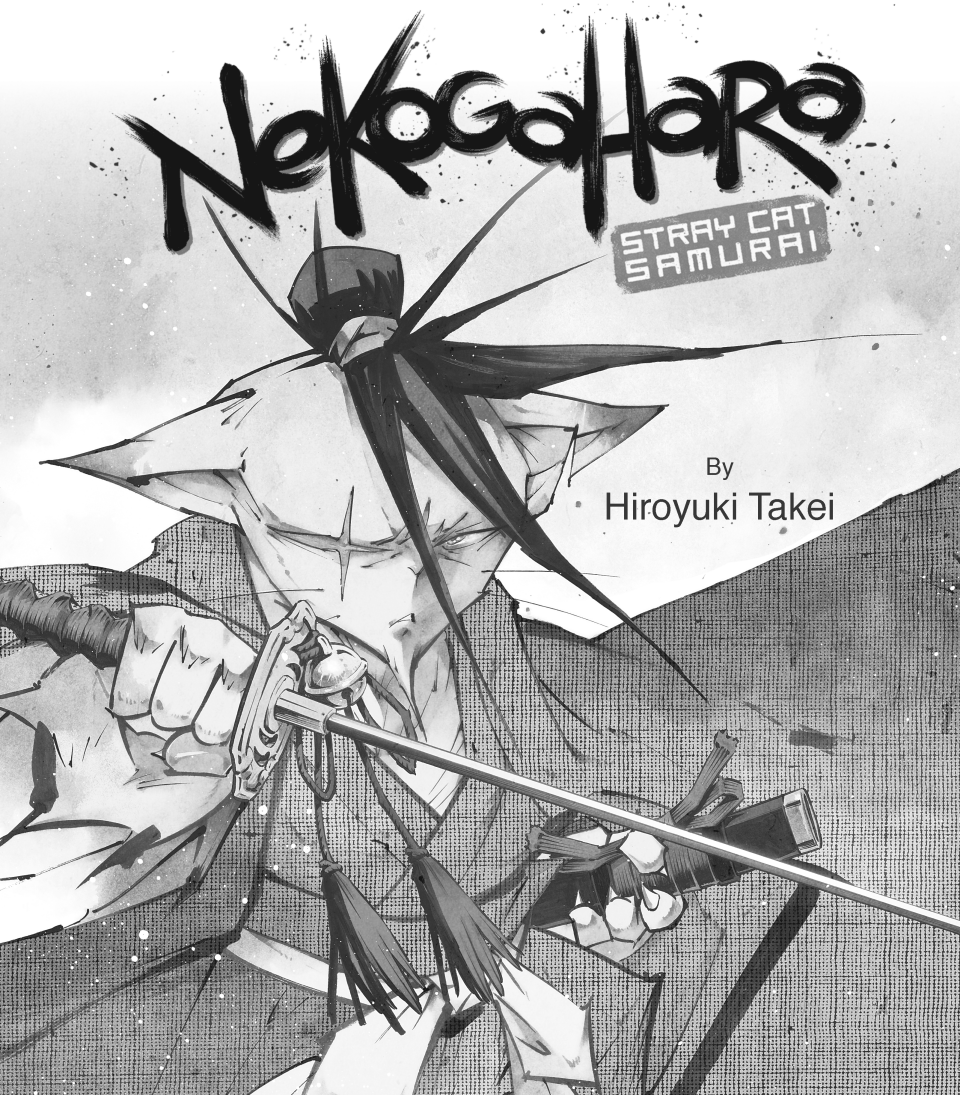
KC KODANSHA COMICS

New action series from Hiroyuki Takei, creator of the classic shonen franchise Shaman King!

In medieval Japan, a bell hanging on the collar is a sign that a cat has a master. Norachiyo's bell hangs from his katana sheath, but he is nonetheless a stray — a ronin. This one-eyed cat samurai travels across a dishonest world, cutting through pretense and deception with his blade.



HAPPINESS

ハピネス

By **Shuzo Oshimi**

From the creator of *The Flowers of Evil*

Nothing interesting is happening in Makoto Ozaki's first year of high school. HIs life is a series of quiet humiliations: low-grade bullies, unreliable friends, and the constant frustration of his adolescent lust. But one night, a pale, thin girl knocks him to the ground in an alley and offers him a choice.

Now everything is different. Daylight is searingly bright. Food tastes awful. And worse than anything is the terrible, consuming thirst...

Praise for Shuzo Oshimi's *The Flowers of Evil*

"A shockingly readable story that vividly—one might even say queasily—evokes the fear and confusion of discovering one's own sexuality. Recommended." —The Manga Critic

"A page-turning tale of sordid middle school blackmail." —Otaku USA Magazine

"A stunning new horror manga." —Third Eye Comics

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Attack on Titan: Before the Fall 15

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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